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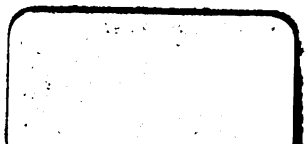


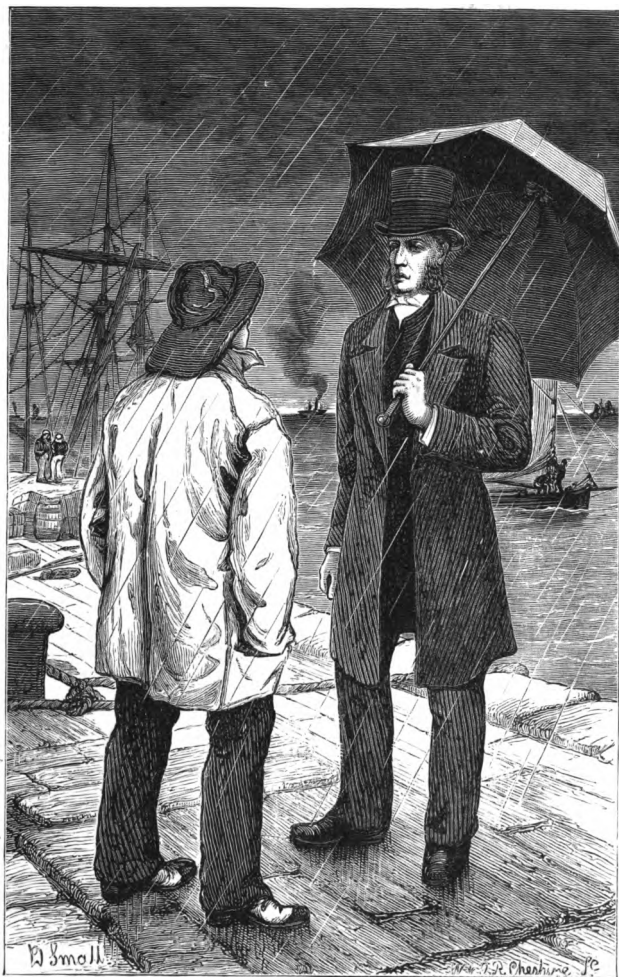
*A thousand miles'
cruise in the Silver cloud*

William Forwell



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“By-and-by, looking out from below the flannel lining of my yellow sou’-wester,
I said, ‘You would not take me for a minister?’” (See page 63.)

A
THOUSAND MILES' CRUISE
IN
THE SILVER CLOUD:

FROM DUNDEE TO FRANCE AND BACK IN
A SMALL BOAT.

BY
WILLIAM FORWELL.

— — —
SECOND EDITION.
— — —



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NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.

I HAVE to thank my readers by whom the first edition was so speedily cleared away; also my reviewers for their very hearty and appreciative notices of the book.

I have revised and made several alterations with a view to this edition. Chapter XIII. is nearly all new.

W. F.

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Dundee

SCOT

A

CRUISE WITH THE SILVER CLOUD.

CHAPTER I.

Sights at Home—Boatmania—Sea in preference to Land—Small Boat preferred to a Large One.

LORD ABERCROMBIE, so goes the story, once when standing on a mountain looking down into the Bay of Naples, exclaimed in ecstasy, "It excels all the views I have ever witnessed!" A stranger standing near expressed his agreement, making, however, one exception. "Where might that view be obtained?" rejoined his lordship. "From a mountain in Scotland called Demiat," was the reply. "Demiat," returned the astonished Abercrombie; "I am the proprietor of Demiat. I must ascend the hill when I return." Whether the story be verbally true or not it matters little. The same thing in principle occurs again and again. Men travel thousands of miles to witness marvels less significant than they could have seen if they had looked for them in their native land. A passion for travelling seized me, but

A

on reflection I found that other lands after your own would be the right order; for where on the face of the globe is the country so rich in historic association, especially to the inhabitants of them, as the British Isles? A visit to Palestine and the other classic spots of earth whose shores border the Mediterranean, also a personal glance at the great fast New World, would be most gratefully enjoyed; not, however, until we have seen a little more of the Old, and especially that part of the Old which stretches away along the shores washed by the German Ocean, beginning at a point near which it has been our privilege for some time to dwell. As to the boatmania, I have often tried to analyse it, but, however ill I succeeded in this, I returned to the unquestionable fact, and was consoled that many men were fond of sailing, and even He who was more than man, though he was not a fisher, was often among them, and frequently with them in a small boat on the sea. It is only on land that the boat-fever is painful, and it reaches the violent stage when on a fine, clear, breezy day you behold others with canvas unfurled cutting a line of silver through the azure waters, and yourself denied all participation in the same. Here the thing rises to a fury; but your foot once on board, the tiller in hand, and the canvas catching the cool breeze, the pulse becomes regular, the fever leaves the blood, and mental convalescence

is at once secured. We sail for the sake of sailing. Among the elements of enjoyment on the deep in a small sailing boat I shall name the following; others can add thereto:—

First—The difference between land and water. We might liken the land to the stiff, rigid certainties of prose, whilst the sea, with its soft, smooth pleasures of uncertainty, is poetry. A sail is a poetical passage, a poem, often a psalm of praise. The land friction is far away. A passage through the rarer element—the atmosphere—would be grand. Look at the swoop of the eagle. The nearest we can approach to that is by a sail.

Second—The power of locomotion. Confinement since time immemorial has been the infliction applied as punishment short of death. Whatever be the barrier, be it walls or waters, it is confinement. But once in a boat with sail, then in one continuous broad pathway there lie open before you three-fourths of the surface of the globe, and for a good boat the wind has three chances to one to be favourable.

Third—It is an extraordinary mode of locomotion. Over the land man can go without any aid from a machine, himself being a machine admirably adapted for land locomotion; but over the sea he cannot go. In his sail and helm, however, he seems to have borrowed the fins of the fish, just as flying would imply the loan of the wing. Here too must be

referred the pleasures of steering. If a man were gifted for a time with wings the glory would lie in the freedom to go where he pleased—to cut through the rarer element his own path. Hence in a boat the pleasures of the helm—the power of choosing his course and cutting at will his own track through the blue brine.

Fourth—The wind favouring (which it will, if you have patience and prudence to wait till it has obliged some of your fellow-mortals), it is the easiest mode of transit. That unseen agent with mysterious touch carries you whithersoever you steer, as if on a path of oil.

Fifth—There is the consciousness of purity. The elements all around are health-invigorating. This was signally proved during the present cruise. For three months we were often contented with but three or four hours' sleep in the twenty-four—sometimes none at all when we continued our voyage at night. It was not possible for the one to relieve the other, for when my boy was steering it fell to me to examine the charts, look for headlands we had never before seen, and name things hitherto to us unknown. Add to this the absence of a loving lady's hand to attend to the preparation of your viands; besides any anxiety that might arise when long out of sight of land, or when it was doubtful whether you would reach a certain point in time, where a certain stage

of the tide was necessary to your progress. Besides the want of sleep, when the wind was adverse and strong there was labour, and very hard labour too—the adjustment and working of the whole gear depending almost entirely on the muscles of one man. If you descend into the earth to examine a mine you may be choked with the fire-damp. If you ascend in a balloon the warmth, &c., necessary to human existence is gone. But the winds that gambol with the waters of the deep contain the elements that support animal life in their most unadulterated form. Why, there you may get wet with impunity, you may lie down and sleep in a damp blanket, and do a thousand things which, if they had the land influence to assist, would sow the seeds of an irreclaimable consumption; but at sea the next draught of fresh wind or the next glimpse of sunshine, and they are forgotten and gone. Health floats on the briny waves. The element below is not better adapted for the finny tribe than the coat of air that covers the deep with its pure oxygen is suited for the breath of man.

Sixth—There is a sublime uncertainty about a sailing boat. By rail the times of departure, yea, and arrival, are all tabulated. The same with the steamer. But in a boat depending on a sail there is a sweet uncertainty giving wide scope in one of the most magnificent fields of nature to hope, which is

the grandest faculty in the soul of man. It is beneath the dignity of hope to contemplate storms or rains or adverse winds. With rosy fingers she gathers the elements of beauty and weaves them into the grandest picture possible. The land, if land there is to be, she clothes in gold, the sea in silver, the sky with blue and purple, and the wind all fair. This may not be, half of it may not be, but then it has been; it is from the past that hope picks out the golden threads to weave this splendid web which stretches out before your gaze. How boundless the expanse of beauty that lies before the gaze of hope when she casts her eyes towards the glorious sea!

Seventh—We cannot deny that there is some charm, too, in the sense of danger. Having crossed the deep something is achieved. There is always as much danger as keep any sensible man watchful, and your admiration for your boat increases in proportion as she proves to you that with your touch, as if she knew your mind and fears, she is able manfully to carry you over these dangers. Such feelings and thoughts as these, along with the prospect of visiting strange and interesting ports and towns and peoples, are some of the things that fling a charm around a boat under sail. To purchase a large yacht and employ the necessary hands to sail her is far beyond the power of many. Be it so. The moment you have got on board another adult skilled, or supposed to

be skilled, in sailing you have possibly shipped your master. It matters not what position he nominally holds, he is a man, and his life is as sweet to him as yours is to you; he will therefore have his dictum as to when and where and how you should sail. To avoid all this, to sail for the very love of sailing and supply all the elements of pleasure I have named, you must be able to depend on your own judgment, manage your own vessel, and she must therefore be comparatively small.

CHAPTER II.

Our Ship—Rig and Dimensions—Safety—Cooking Apparatus—Oatmeal—Sleeping Facilities—Furnishings—The Three Deeps.

“Where are you from?” “Dundee.” “Where are you bound to?” “Calais.” Holds in his breath and stares. “In that thing?” “Yes.” “How many are there of you?” “This little fellow (pointing to my son of fourteen years) and myself.” “I say, master, what is your idea for this voyage?” I have given you, gentle reader, the idea first, nay seven of them, and as far as lies in my pen I shall now make my appearance before you on the water.

My yawl was built in September, 1876, by Mr. A. Burn, Montrose. I personally superintended, giving shape and dimensions. Boatbuilders are the most agreeable class of workmen I have ever attended. The mason has his ideas of strength and appearance, and these he will follow out in spite of you, even in building an oven, when solidity, the quality required, is entirely sacrificed. The photographer must have you sit in a position to please him, whereas you are to pay for the picture. But the notions of boat-fanciers are so widely divergent, and perhaps some-

times so whimsical, that it seems to be the rule of boatbuilders to produce the shape that suits the man that has the cash to pay.

The order was:—a fisher's yawl—one exception, she must be square-sterned, an exception which only affects the eye, but never touches the water. Length, 19 feet on the keel, with a proportionate breadth of beam, 7 feet 9 inches, which I fixed after measuring scores of boats of this type. Rig, the usual yawl, with lug-sail.

This rig had struck me as exceedingly handy, when, two years ago, I had the use of an old friend's boat at Saltcoats, which alone, to the horror of all with the exception of the owner, I sailed up and down the west coast between Millport, Ayr, and Arran.

Thus finished I left Montrose lighthouse one fine afternoon about one o'clock, amid the predictions of the fishers that I would be lost, and reached Broughty Ferry by seven. But to be able to go further than one day's sail some improvements were required. These were made during winter, and in doing so three things were steadily kept in view—safety, sleep, speed. Ample space for sleeping was decked over in the forepart of the boat, taking care to leave room aft for full purchase on at least one pair of oars. The partial deck was intended also to fling off the crest of a wave should ever such intrude.

Air-tanks were also introduced after the manner of a lifeboat. There are three compartments filled by these floaters, two with a large tank in each, able to float together about 12 cwt. The third I filled with forty-two biscuit tins hermetically sealed by the plumber, so that if a steamer ran through our ship, cutting her into splinters, the forty-two would be scattered over the water; and by laying hold on any one of them you could float yourself without fail, each of them having exactly double the floating power of an ordinary-sized life-belt. After hearing this explained a minister at Whitby suddenly changed his opinion, and expressed his readiness to accompany me with the greatest confidence as far as the next port at which I might call.

Inside the little cabin two things were needful—to eat and to sleep—for we carried our hotel with us, or rather our little floating hotel carried us. Reading Mr. M'Gregor's delightful description of his *Voyage alone in the Yawl Rob Roy*, not only suggested such a distance as France to me, but it recommended certain cooking apparatus. Man is a cooking animal, and your comfort and endurance of a long voyage depend very much on the power of your *cuisine*. The principal thing in this contrivance is a Russian lamp, which, from methyated spirits of wine, supplies a *blast* flame that will boil water in two or three minutes. The copper boiler

has feet and handle all detachable, and lid which, when turned upside down, serves admirably as a frying-pan, and in the shortest notice you can, without smoke or soot, have the gurgling, savoury, well-approved dish—ham and eggs. French eggs and Wiltshire bacon will give this in its greatest perfection. The boilers are made 6 inches, 7 inches, and 8 inches in diameter, and the price accordingly. “Rob Roy” being a single man, not only when he sailed but when he was ashore, carried but the 6-inch cuisine. Some fine day on the Tay I might have passenger friends, so I ordered the 8-inch boiler and corresponding etceteras, costing £4, 6s., inclusive of carriage from London. For tea or coffee, boiling eggs, or frying ham in a hurry, the “Rob Roy” cuisine, manufactured by the London people, is perfect. But I am not prepared to accord the unqualified praise to this article granted by Mr. M’Gregor. The objection to it is that, being a blast flame, it is too quick, and for a continuous boil too strong, exhausting the supply of spirit in ten or fifteen minutes, and for the cooking of anything like a dinner would be comparatively expensive. When, for example, we felt it desirable to depart from bread, tea, &c., and boil for a change such an article as rice, we laid aside the £4, 6s. affair, and with a thing made long ago (not in London, but in Dundee) for 4s. 6d. —a common spirit lamp, and with a great saving of

spirit, produced the desired dish. Neither did the London apparatus know anything about making porridge. It was too quick, and either boiled them over, or singed them, or went out before they were boiled enough, or did all three. And, O Scotchmen! what say ye to the following statement? For ten weeks I never saw oatmeal! The last attempt we made to procure it was at an English port not far on our way south. The grocer produced a small drawer like that of an apothecary, with a very little in it, which he said he sold at 4*d.* per lb. Judging from the quantity he seemed to keep in stock, I concluded that it might be nine months old, and came away without it. And so I never saw it again till we had crossed the Forth on our return, when one evening in the Free Manse of Crail we enjoyed the great treat of good meal made into porridge, served up swimming in good sweet milk.

If the Scotch haggis, which is greatly composed of oatmeal, on one occasion inspired Burns, appearing to him as "the chieftain o' the pudding race," I declare that, after missing it so long, on its first appearance again good oatmeal porridge and sweet milk appeared to me as the essence and excellence of all the luxuries of earth. The Englishman may grin, but he can grin at himself. His bread and beer are poor substitutes for the soft, sweet, substantial Scotch article. The want of porridge and milk

is written with wrinkles on the haggard countenances of the lower classes in England. So much for the cooking department. The sleeping facilities were perfect. On each side of the little cabin is a low seat; during the day these serve as table, chairs, sofa, and sideboard, for here we sit, eat, rest, and read. At night a cushion is laid on each of them, your clothes, being sure to bring your soft woollen undergarment uppermost, make an excellent pillow, besides being at hand in case of hurry. You may stretch yourself out though you be seven feet long. And with three pairs of blankets each, Morpheus never held more complete sway than he did over the two mortals that lay in the *Silver Cloud*, that is, when we had the pleasure of being in a harbour. Wearied, we often lay down and enjoyed this great blessing sometimes denied to kings. If there was motion, it far surpassed in smoothness that generally enjoyed by the slumbering infant, and told only of the buoyancy of our barque. The hatch was left open for the entrance of pure air according to the height of temperature, and the cluck, cluck of the water at your ear was music, which soon sent us asleep. Our cabin is at least 7 feet by 7; but there is only about four feet square of this in which you can sit straight, and even then you would be better without your legs. The entrance or hatchway is in the roof, and serves both for door and window; also,

when dressing, in putting on that part of your clothing which necessitates stretching yourself, you can raise half of your body on a fine morning, through the hatch. Yet in this small compartment we not only ate and slept healthily and comfortably, but I kept all the accoutrements that would enable me to emerge in three different characters—as a tar to cope with the fickle element, as a respectable middle-class gentleman to go ashore, and as a clergyman to give the good people of England a taste of Scotch preaching.

To do the first there were a suit of wearing clothes, plus an oilskin suit and sou'wester, two life-belts, a compass, a barometer, charts, books of sailing directions, with tide tables. Our greatest danger was being blown out to sea. Well, the gale might cease in a day, then we might find ourselves in the middle of the German Ocean; the sun might break through, and to enable us to know exactly our longitude and latitude I added my sextant and *Norrie's Navigation*, it being always understood that the captain had a thorough practical knowledge of how to use every one of these. The sextant was never needed, for generally when you could not sight land the same reason prevented a sight of the sun. *Norrie*, however, was several times required, for though the course and distance from one place to another are generally given in the sailing directions for the ac-

commodation of coasters, for various reasons our course sometimes differed widely from theirs, and on such occasions I had to take the longitude and latitude of the two places, and work out from the principles of navigation the course and distance, just in the same way as if you had to cross the Pacific Ocean. And I would advise no man to undertake the same voyage, or any voyage of a similar distance, unless he had a little knowledge in this department. To come out in the second character I have named, you only required an additional suit of clothes and a number of half-sovereigns. The third character required the possession of a black surtout, a white necktie, a long black hat, an umbrella (who ever saw a minister without an umbrella?), and a number of sermons either in mind or manuscript, accompanied with a thoroughly devotional spirit, such as the wondrous deep is calculated admirably to inspire and maintain. Our ship, then, by name the *Silver Cloud*, is about 20 feet long, with a proportionate breadth of beam. We have two anchors, and about 40 fathoms of heavy chain. We are attended by a dingey, or small-boat, which is a great annoyance at sea, but of incalculable value whenever we enter port or think of anchoring. And the crew on board, which, "all told," consist of my lad of fourteen years and myself, we are ready for sea.

I should have mentioned another book of direc-

tions for the deep. There are three awful deeps defying the scrutiny of man. There is the ocean deep, on the glittering surface of which we sail; there is the deep overhead, whose surface is the beautiful star-bespangled canopy of heaven; and there is the spiritual deep, the surface of which we see in the Bible. Mystery and marvel envelop them all.

If a track of the ocean's bed, over which for ages maritime traffic has been carried on, were dried, and not by night, as in the case of the Israelites for mere transit, but by day, we were allowed to survey it, what wonders would be revealed!

"Methought I saw a thousand fearful wracks,
A thousand men that fishes gnawed upon,
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearls,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scattered in the bottom of the sea.
Some lay in dead men's skulls, and in those holes
Where eyes did once inhabit there were crept,
As 'twere in scorn of eyes, reflecting gems
That wooed the slimy bottom of the deep,
And mocked the dead bones that lay scattered by."

But these and the other wonders that belong to the deep are all covered by the impervious ocean.

Again, mysteries of mysteries reign in the deep of blue above. Suppose an endless straight line drawn perpendicular to the earth's surface, passing through a planet or a star, it is questionable if a human mind was ever formed that could grasp the whole knowledge in the way of this single line; besides, we have

supposed the line endless, and that implies a conception to grasp which a human brain has yet to be created. And if such mysteries are threaded on a single line, what shall we say of the millions of lines that could be drawn from as many points on any sphere? But the great cerulean circle conceals them all.

Now, what these two great works of God, the ocean deep and the celestial deep, are to the common objects of human art with which we are surrounded, the Bible is to all the other books we know. It directs the gaze to a region unfathomable, comprising things transcendently grand, inscrutably divine—heights unscaled, depths fathomed and depths unfathomed; marvels and mysteries appallingly profound; which characteristic some have forgotten, supposing, since it was written for guidance, it should be as shallow, clear, and simple as a common guide-book or book of sailing directions; and not finding it so they have disregarded its teaching, and on the great mysterious spiritual deep have made shipwreck of their souls. But though the rolling ocean be mysterious, it can be navigated, if you patiently wait the wind; and though the stars to an amateur seem scattered irregularly over the illimitable blue, yet to the man of greater ken they are fixed lamps, and when all else has failed him on the watery waste they point his passage home; so the

Bible discovers a mysterious deep, in which the human spirit is lost, but which is navigable. Patience, wait the winds, ye spiritual mariners; look for the lights as described in your guide-book. There they are, fixed like the glory of an evening star—the beacons that lit and pointed the way to Moses, Abraham, Noah, Job, and the later voyagers that sought a passage to the fairer havens.

With the ocean deep below us, and the celestial deep above, the Bible revealing the other deep is beautifully in its place.

What a co-relation exists between these three deeps! In the ocean deep we have mirrored the celestial deep; again, in the celestial deep we see the image of the spiritual deep—the deepest, grandest deep of all. And if our spirits can just get near enough to hear it, from the three deeps there wells forth the grandest, the most glorious harmony. The hoarse roar of the ocean may be considered as the bass, with which the song of the celestial spheres magnificently blends, and the harmony is only sweeter, grander, more divine, when these are mingled with the spiritual songs, and sound of holy harp that issue from the spiritual deep, the crystal sea immediately before the throne of God.

We carry a Bible then, for it, too, is a book of sailing directions. For example, it prohibits all sailing on the Sabbath-day for such a craft as ours.

But it has peculiarities to which none of the other books of sailing directions pretend.

Carrying a Bible, for example, you carry a number of promises, to one of which we clung tenaciously; we printed it alone, and prominently hung it in bold type in our cabin. Here it is: "Thus saith Jehovah, When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee." Hath He said so? and can we in this instance appropriate the words? Then here we go.

CHAPTER III.

Anchor Weighed—St. Andrew's Bay—Firth of Forth: St. Abbs:
Eyemouth—Berwick—First Night at Sea—Grace Darling's
Home—Looking for the Coquet Island—In the Mist—At
Anchor.

Friday, 18th May.—For the first time for seven weeks found the wind blowing from the west, so we let go our mooring off Broughty Ferry at 7 A.M., and bore away with wind and tide. There was a commotion outside, however, which we did not expect—the result of the previous easterly winds, and about eight o'clock, as we left the channel of the Tay, at buoy No. 3, when steering through the swell that rose on the banks, the tiller split in my hand. I had lost the one made with the boat by Mr. Burn; and the person who made this one had not been accustomed to select wood for sea wear. It was cracked all over—I had said as much, but I should have stoutly rejected it, and so I had myself to blame. You must satisfy your own judgment in these things, however much experience the workman may suppose himself to possess. Nothing of more importance on board of ship than the helm and the anchor; nothing is associated with death and life so much as these.

The anchor made by the Montrose smith for the *Silver Cloud* I on first sight condemned. It was neither size nor shape. The reply was, "I have made anchors for thirty years." Still I had my misgivings, secretly ordered another from another



LEAVING BROUGHTY FERRY ROADS.

smith, and for safety sailed with the two. Among the first days we had a sail on the Tay we were suddenly caught by a snarling sou'-wester, and, going with wind and tide at such a speed, rather than risk catching my moorings, when the tug of the buoy might have torn me out of my vessel—mooring the skipper and letting his ship go—as I neared them I

flung out the anchor made on the experienced anvil; but we drifted dangerously. Then I addressed the waves, making my voice distinct even amid the roar and rushing of the waters, telling them with all the emphasis I could command that "the man that made that anchor had made anchors for thirty years." But if ever things inanimate were gifted with the power of speech, it was the waves that day when they broke on the bow of my boat, and distinctly repeated each time, "Bosh! bosh! bosh!" I cast out the other anchor, and though by this time very near the shore, saved the ship.

The tiller was tied with cord, and under a fresh breeze we soon sped across St. Andrew's Bay, where it became clear that the roof of our little cabin was anything but water-tight, when through press of sail or bounding wave our little vessel began to dip her bow in the sparkling brine. We rounded the North Carr Beacon about ten o'clock. The wind would now have the full fetch of the Forth. My ship was untried in waves like these; neither was my compass tested since I had shipped 30 fathoms of iron chain, to which of necessity it lay very near; and the mist hung upon the sea and hid everything beyond the May. The compass course to St. Abb's Head was S. by E. $\frac{1}{4}$ E., distance 26 miles; but in the circumstances I steered two points to the right of it, keeping the island in sight on my starboard till I saw

how my vessel would behave, for possibly I might require to run back under lee of the "East Neuk." The full force of the fresh westerly breeze issuing from the Firth braced up our nerves; it also cleared the eye, for away over the May Island one piece of mist seemed thicker than the rest, and out of it soon grew the dim outline of the Bass Rock. No more thoughts of shelter; we reasoned that we had felt the full force of the sea; took our departure from the May for St. Abb's (s. by E. $\frac{3}{4}$ E., $21\frac{1}{2}$ miles); big ships came mounting down the Firth; the breeze fair abaft, and the day wore on. By-and-by the wind decreased, the tidal current was adverse, and it was 5 P.M. ere we were abreast of St. Abb's. But now the current turned in our favour, a gentle breeze came off the land, and as we quaffed our warm tea the sun shone out and showed St. Abb's in all the glory of an evening in the riper end of May. Coldingham Bay was alive with tanned lugsails making for Eyemouth, which harbour we should have entered, especially when among such congenial guides, if we had wished a sleep for the night. But wind and tide thus we could reach Berwick in an hour—7 miles—and Scotland would become a thing of the past. Between Eyemouth and Berwick outside it was like the upheaving of a spacious plain, which sank again and you with it, till it was succeeded by another, each rolling away towards the

shore, big with wrath, but silent and with a smooth face as they passed us till they burst against the headlands, and sent their thunder in the twilight athwart the responsive deep.

I had minutely examined the chart, made sure of the course when taking the harbour, and was abreast



OFF BERWICK.

of Berwick by 8 P.M., ready to make the attempt. On the right was the stone pier, on the left was a bank on which the rollers wildly broke. There was a fresh in the Tweed caused by the rain; besides, the tide was running out, and the amount of wind we had was too light; our progress was therefore slow.

The wreck of a steamer lies in the channel—the entrance being to the windward of the wreck. I could not clear the wreck, and resolved on two boat-lengths of a tack towards the breakers on the left. I took the helm and the lug, leaving the shifting of the jib sheets to the rest of the crew. These were somewhat entangled—the jib sheets were not shifted in time—and, rather than wreck or run any further risk, I slackened the lug sheet, and with the stream bore away to sea. Berwick in the twilight, for the present, farewell!

Now we had all that makes sailing inconvenient. It was getting dark, it was wet, it was cold, and by midnight it became absolutely calm. It had not been in my purpose to sail that night, and so, further than a general glance I had not examined the chart beyond Berwick, and with the roar upon the dark shore I resolved to keep outside the Farne Islands. Although so many ships have been wrecked among these rocks—some companies having forbidden the inside passage to their steamships at any time—two steamers in the dark came out from among them and crossed our bow. A lighthouse beam is a gladsome thing as it dances on the waves; but a steamer's lights, if you see them all, and especially on a calm night, are like the fierce eyes of a wild beast peering through the dark, possibly on the way to send you all to destruction.

Although we were taking the more dignified course, we gave due heed and honour to these dangerous desperadoes. Whenever we sighted a steamer and discovered the course she was steering, although we knew it, we let "the rule of the road" go to the wind, and took the rule of the hare, unless it was dead calm. We threw ourselves on the tack that sent us furthest out of her way, and when her lights disappeared resumed our course.

We had but one lamp, which at night was set above the compass, where it was seen all around. When the morning dawned we were about a mile outside the lighthouse, whose lamp had guided us all through the dark. That is the lighthouse of which William Darling was the keeper. We might have gone nearer but for the Knavestone—a rock on which a Peterhead sloop was wrecked when Grace was too young to row. She only witnessed the work. Her brothers Robert and George being still at home, they, along with their father, went to the rescue and saved the only survivor of the wreck. But that red-painted tower across the calm waters, which has sent forth its cheering beam to us all night, is the home where Grace Darling grew to womanhood, and from which she issued with her father one fearful morning in a small boat to face the fury of the deep for the saving of the survivors of the *Forfarshire*, so that her fame is extensive as the English tongue, and she lives in

millions of hearts that never saw her earthly home as the immortal heroine of the Farne Isles !

Meanwhile on our right and away in the morning mist, we leave the Longstone, the late loved abode of the Darlings; the Brownsman, on which the *Forfarshire* went down; Bamborough Castle, of old the residence of the king; Holy Isle, the twin sister of the Scottish Iona, of hoary memory in the Church's story; and the Farnes as a whole, early sanctified by the hermitage of St. Cuthbert, and of late celebrated as the scene of the sublime act of a young woman which thrilled the heart of universal mankind. The spirit of the past reigns on the waters here, breathes in the salubrious winds which play around these eternal rocks, and historic lore gathers her richest gems along this rugged shore.

The wind now came out of the east with rain, the clouds came down, and as the Longstone receded no land was in view. We steered west till we sighted the Northumbrian coast. Now the breeze freshened, and on we dashed past reefs with buoys far out and rocks and rugged headlands, looking for the Coquet Island, in the lee of which there is anchorage at which we mean to pause. To look for a thing you have seen before your work is easy, but otherwise your task is not so plain. When Dunstanborough Head unveiled itself I said, "There is the Coquet." But as the outline became more distinct, and a cer-

tain buoy was passed and noted, we rightly called it Dunstanborough. The chart gave a small side view of the Coquet and its lighthouse, which was not to be mistaken, and away ahead in the dim distance we soon "picked it up." Wind and wave from the east having increased, by this time it appeared to the captain advisable to shorten sail, so the jib was taken down, and the lug, now with two reefs in it, since we had a leading wind, fixed on the stem. During the time this operation is being performed our ship is tumbling about, describing with her mast an arc of at least 90 degrees, and of course her bow turning to all points of the compass.

The clouds draw closer around, and by the time we are ready to sail neither mainland nor islands are seen. Where now is the Coquet, and how do you steer for it? If we had been sailing by compass before, all we had to do was to continue the course. But we had been sailing by sight, and because we did not need, did not notice the compass course. It is conceivable that some in this position might have been puzzled. You could not with the wind off the sea run west till you sighted the land, and run the risk of being embayed among the breakers now lashing the shore. Neither could you guess the course to the Coquet Island. I guessed the distance I was from the coast, and from that point on the chart drew the course to the Coquet, steered accordingly, and in a very short time the island reappeared right ahead.

I should never have stopped here, with such a strong wind in my favour, but the leading thoughts that guided me in were these:—(1) Never having touched the shore since we left Broughty we were beginning to think we were to have too little contact with the land, and that was not in our plan of this *voyage of discovery* at all. I wished to let my boy hear the change of tongue already, and so forth. (2) I accused myself of greed for distance, when on the previous evening I should have sailed into Eyemouth, and was beat to enter when I reached Berwick. (3) If the wind and sea increased I did not know how my vessel would stand the storm. I know now that with the wind on her quarter, as it was that day, we could have safely reached Tyne-mouth or Sunderland in three hours, and probably without shipping one ounce of water all the way. But then my ship was in a manner untried, and it will be admitted that it was preferable to err on the safe side. So down went the anchor in the lee of the Coquet at eleven o'clock Saturday forenoon, the 19th of May. After "bringing up" here, from the want of the previous night's sleep, and the fact that we were neither sailing nor in a harbour, my spirits came down to zero. Of course I would not sail on Sabbath, and the idea of lying at anchor here till Monday made me feel as if I had been drinking—salt water. However, this was not to be.

CHAPTER IV.

Unsafe Anchorage—Amble—Mixing among the English—A Day Inland.

The wind, rising to a gale, had veered round towards north. According to book there was no shelter under the Coquet unless during an east wind, so I weighed anchor and hoisted sail, to see if we could not beat back to Amble, the harbour of Warkworth, just one mile behind. Erring on the safe side again, but erring, I had unfurled too little sail, and with a strong tide, a heavy wave, and fresh wind all against us, it seemed best to drop the anchor and try the effect of a little patience on the sea. But without waiting even the turn of the tide three courses were open:—(1) Weigh anchor and start for Shields—the wind was strong but fair; (2) if there was to be risk riding here with 40 fathoms of chain in 7 fathoms of water, the crew could go on to the island and risk only the ship; or (3), you could get a tow from the Amble steamer, and crew and ship be safe in port at once. The first was the cheapest, and it is certainly what I would do now, knowing the powers of the *Silver Cloud* in “running,” sufficiently tested after-

wards where we had no choice; but it seemed the most dangerous, and was at once abandoned in favour of the others. The second, after taking down the mast and making all snug, we were actually doing, and were on our way for the island in the Coquet coble when the steamer appeared. After some labour raising such a length of anchor chain, I caught hold of the tow-rope, and away we went for Warkworth. As the steamer proceeded in advance she tumbled on the waves, and swung sometimes till each paddle in its turn spun round in the air like a wind-mill. One of her men was steering us, and as we approached the bar he said, "If she goes over (*i.e.* if the *Silver Cloud* capsizes) be ready to jump out." I fixed my eye on his face to ascertain his mood, but he only gazed forward on the sea, his countenance presenting anything but a picture of fun. The measuring powers of this man will be manifest when I inform the reader that the light crank small boat in tow of us did not capsize in the same sea. Doubtless, in tow and against such a wave, we had our faces well washed in salt water; but the *Silver Cloud* showed no more signs of "going over" or of going under than did his old steamer.

Warkworth harbour, 90 nautical miles from Dundee, 140 by rail, and sure of a Sabbath's rest.

Two resolutions were made and marked:—(1) Don't sail till the wind is more off the land. (2)

Never attempt to take a strange harbour, if possible, where there is a river (witness Berwick), unless the tide be with you.

As the contents of our cabin, including blankets, were wet, we sought the shelter of an inn ashore. In future we keep our blankets carefully rolled and tied up during the day in a good thick tarpaulin, so that whatever turns up, unless it be the keel of the *Silver Cloud*, these will be dry in the evening.

What a change in the country and customs since yesterday morning, though we have only come along in a small boat under sail! Coffee is the substitute for tea, the mistress bakes her own bread, and the porker gives the prevailing scent at the table.

We felt, too, that we were leaving behind the rough raw address of the Scotch, and falling among a people of sweet lips. It is common for them to call one another Honey, pronounced Hooney, or rather 'Ooney. Some of them had been north, and preserved sweet recollections of Dundee, which they pronounced Dondee, and sometimes Doondiee.

Sabbath, 20th.—Stayed ashore, mingling among the public worshippers of God, beginning the day in the Congregational Chapel, and ending in the evening in the Established Church of England.

Monday, 21st May.—Sea still running high, wind inshore; so we resolve on a day inland. Leaving Amble, and ascending the river Coquet one mile, we

pass Warkworth. Here stand the lofty ruins of the castle—the ancient sea-coast residence of the Percy family, which figures so boldly in English history. Their heirs still inhabit the famous castle at Alnwick, which old town lies just ten miles from our boat, about half-way between Berwick and Newcastle, on the highway between the two kingdoms, and thither by rail we go, expecting pasture for the mind. The great ornament of the town of Alnwick is the ancient stronghold of the Percys—the stately Gothic castle of the Duke of Northumberland. It is the finest feudal fortress in the kingdom. Its walls and towers present a peculiar appearance, being thickly set with the statues of fighting men in various warlike positions. The situation is beautiful, having behind the town of Alnwick, the population, the strength as it were, and away below in front the river Aln slowly meanders through the groves and green lawn, doubtless a defence of old, whilst from the castle windows the eye commands a vast extent of the surrounding country. This spot was chosen for military purposes by the Romans. It was a strong fortress in the time of the Saxons. The building now covers at least five acres of ground, and with its fortified towers and battlements, its awful entrance, its well-stocked armoury, and its bottle dungeon, it still wears the aspect of the ancient times. The family residence is in the centre of the inner court, and its decorations

are most magnificent. Here was the home of one of the nobles who at the peril of the sword demanded from King John that glorious basis of English freedom, Magna Charta. Here, too, dwelt one of the bold barons who in 1301 subscribed the celebrated letter to Pope Boniface VIII. on his attempting to interfere in the affairs of the kingdom, informing him "that the king was not to answer in judgment for any rights of the Crown of England before any tribunal under heaven. . . . And thus by the help of God they would resolve and with all their force maintain against all men." This castle lay in the way of the Scots and had to be taken by them in their invasions of England. On this fine clear May afternoon, leaving the feudal fortress, we march one mile along the highway towards Scotland. What touches of antiquity are here! What hoary associations crowd in upon the spirit! Here in a grassy wood stands the ornamental cross which commemorates the death of Malcolm III. of Scotland (1092), the announcement of which told so piercingly on the spirit of his loving queen, who waited his return on the rock of Edinburgh, that she immediately followed him into the spirit-land. Yonder, too, stands the sign which marks the spot where William the Lion in 1174 was taken prisoner. And Henry VI. of England, the imbecile monarch, the drooping Red Rose, with his haughty Margaret of Anjou and the

unfortunate prince, in flight (1461) for shelter to Scotland took refuge and rest in this mighty castle of the Percys.

If we stayed among these hills what spirits would wake up as we touched the sacred spring of history. Here rises the Scottish Bruce, who never knew the boundary of the Tweed. The echo of his voice wakes up a Wallace on the scene. And yonder in a row the long line of the Percys appear; some of them stained with blood of battle, some flushed with victory, and some outrivalled in their love. Sir Ralf and Sir Henry of the Hotspur would recount their conquests; whilst the sixth earl would relate how he loved Anne Boleyn, but his rival was a king.

And hither, too, of late, at the motherly invitation of Her Grace, came the Longstone Lassie, far gone in consumption, yet beautiful, wearing her crown set with nine living spirits taken from the deep, when death, alas! showed he dare defy even the nursing of a duchess! But how am I to answer those whose thoughts have started with us only in the spirit of a sail? We dare not stay longer to interrogate the land. We must hasten to the shore, and be ready rather to ask, "What are the wild waves saying?" As we leave the train the ghost of the Warkworth hermit beckons us over; but though so close at hand we have not sufficient appreciation for the habits of a hermit, nor time even to permit a visit to his haunted cave.

CHAPTER V.

Dingey Stolen—Fair wind favours the Preacher—Tynemouth—Sunderland—Yielding to the Storm—Kindness of our Countrymen in Foreign Port—Christian Hospitality—Becalmed—The Whole Crew Overboard.

“Where is the dingey?” were the first sounds that broke silence on board the *Silver Cloud* as the captain raised himself through the hatch to inhale the fine fresh air at 3.45 on Friday morning. Whether on the previous evening it had been made fast to its massier sister we were not sure. Search was instituted, and it was found drawn up above high-water mark, away up the river, in a nook unseen till you reached the spot, the fine skulls and galvanized rowlocks gone. This search swallowed up the day. Of the twenty ports at which I called, and often left my ship, this is the only one where I sustained loss by theft.

Now arrived a letter from Rev. J. S. Rae, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Sunderland, saying that should I reach him before Sabbath he would assign the conducting of the forenoon service to me; whereupon I said to my mate, “You’ll see the breeze blowing in the right direction to-morrow morning.” Fickle as

the wind may be, I have always found it constant in this—against the saving of a sermon. Superstition says, “Don’t sail with a minister.” Well, if he be fleeing from his duty like Jonah, or going on too long a holiday, I will not insure him against the tempest. But if engaged to preach, my experience is, and I might give many instances, that the fair wind favours the preacher.

Saturday, 26th May, 2.30 A.M.—Lo, the zephyrs fan the waters—a glorious westerly breeze. We leave the harbour by 3.30. Sunrise on a summer sea is simply indescribable. The grandest language, the most glowing metaphors, come short of the conception. Now on our port the Coquet Island raises its golden sides out of the blue deep; the chalk-white light-towers glisten on its crest; their lamps, which sent their golden light over the dark waters, now, borrowing the eastern beam, sparkle with a blaze of crystal sheen, whilst beside them is a small dark gesticulating figure. It is the keeper, who has spied us, and is waving adieu. Hauxley Reefs, which a yacht struck last year and went suddenly down, and the Bondicar Bush, are the starboard dangers. From all such dangers, however, for the time being, the off-shore westerly wind has swept the sea smooth. At a grand pace we speed along, the wind so fresh that the full sail is just sufficient. The Coquet, astern now, melts away in the morning gold. On

our port beam the straight line which marks the meeting of the heavenly blue and the deeper blue of ocean is beautifully broken by ships under shining sails, pressing on in a line parallel to our own. Away in yonder, on the starboard bow, blithely sits the town of Blyth in the morning beams. Some fishers plying their unsteady calling dance across our bow, when a shout is exchanged. Cheering on the wild waves is a shout from a human heart. Hartley, nestling behind the rocks and among the cliffs, next glides past. Right ahead now appears the high rocky promontory, crowned with the venerable ruins of the castle and ancient priory, which marks the mouth of the Tyne. We are soon abreast of its far-reaching piers and bold cliffs, and the glittering terraces that run up the slopes like ornamental necklaces which Tynemouth has flung over her shoulder next the sea shine in all their morning grandeur. Steamers are sailing out and in, leaving a silver thread behind them, like so many shuttles weaving the web of the nation's wealth. Why wonder that we long to leave "the dull unchanging shore?"

"Give me the flashing brine,
The spray and the tempest's roar."

Presently the waters begin to boil beneath us, indicating the crossing of the tides off the Tyne bar; but the bow of the *Silver Cloud* is directed for Souter

Point, and the Tyne, with its tugs and sparkling terraced cliffs, dissolves behind. Only 9 A.M., and we are twenty miles on our way. From Shields to Sunderland the rocks rise in piles along the shore, and present a fantastic front to the ocean. The deep caves dug by the lashing waves, the dark holes and jutting eminences, suggest the figure with the bare skull, deep eye-sockets, and crossed bones. These rocks, raising their rough heads on high, are the eternal tombstones of hundreds that have gone down to the grave at their feet, by the natives unheard of and unknown. Souter Point is past, Sunderland all in view, and only 10 A.M. With that wind, and now the tide in favour—for we have been stemming it since we started—how easy to add to the 26 already made, other 50 miles. But we have to see our old college friend, preach in his grand church, and spend the Sabbath here; and the *Silver Cloud*, in the slack of the tide and with a good aim, runs into the port, which, after Newcastle, is the greatest for shipping coal in the world, and is resorted to by vessels of the largest tonnage from all the commercial countries on the globe. We entered the port by the northern opening—that is, the one formed by the river Wear; spent three hours in search of a quiet place to lie; failed to find such, and moored among the cobbles; changed our dress; said something about our boat to the keepers of the dock-gates; and then plunged into

the smoke and density of a Saturday afternoon in a large town in search of a genial countenance which we had not seen for six years. To all the beds you can name we prefer that in the low cabin of our boat, where our heads are really below the level of the water—if we are only going to the pew. A little wool on your coat, from necessary close contact with the bedding, or even a spot of Archangel on the breast of your shirt, will pass in the crowd. But if bound for the pulpit, better take your departure from the toilet of the manse. So the whole crew resolved to sleep one night on the hard unbending earth, softened, however, by the gentle treatment and generous hospitality of our reverend friend. And the reader may leave us there and take a walk through the town. Sunderland, besides its vast coal trade, maintains a lively part in the North Sea fishing. Roker, which we passed on our starboard a mile north of the piers, is the resort for sea-bathing and the locality for the shining summer residences of the rich.

Sunderland's greatest modern glory is that it is the birthplace of that most able, most brave, and most Christian soldier—Sir Henry Havelock; so that you may visit the Havelock statue in the fine park, take a sail in the Havelock steamer, visit the Havelock Hall, and decorate yourself, in fine, all round with Havelock ornaments.

Monday, 28th May.—Gale blowing from south-west. Never thought of facing it.

Tuesday, 29th.—Barometer risen a little, and at 5 A.M. we part company with the Wear cobbles to see how we can lie along the coast. The *Silver Cloud*, though the wind had veered towards south, showed at once that we should not need to tack. But then it came in such “lumps”—it was too strong and gusty to make progress comfortably, the hope of *cooked* food being beyond the question. Shipping part of a wave over the lee gunwale, I addressed the rest of the crew thus—“Among other things we must learn to yield. Here is a splendid opportunity to prove that we can do it. Then 'bout ship. Slack the main sheet, and away we go.” Instead, however, of running back into the northern or river entrance among the coal dust and a company gathered from all parts of the earth, we take the opening nearest us, called the southern outlet, where we find splendid accommodation, no tidal current, plenty of depth at any state of tide, and the best of company—half-a-dozen big Scotch fishing-boats from Cockenzie on the Forth—and, to crown all, the reason why we have come back is the reason why they have not gone out at all—namely, too much wind. This was a grand chord of harmony. No shame to us returning if these giants hid themselves here from the blast. We were simply at home. This corner was turned into a veri-

table northern harbour, where you might have heard, and heard nothing else but the broadest Scotch—the captain of the *Silver Cloud* proving himself not a whit behind the rest in his native dialect, though over the pulpit on a previous day, and fitting occasion, he had hung his best English with all the powers at his command.

The smallness of our craft and the length of our cruise awakened the sympathies and kindled up the kindly feelings of those sturdy homely men. First, as we lay alongside, they offered us water, which we accepted, and had an extra good wash. Seeing we had no chimney protruding through our cabin roof, they supposed us denied many of the comforts which they enjoyed, and so by-and-by a man looked over the gunwale of the boat that lay next us, with the words, addressed to the younger of the crew, but in hearing of us both, “We’ve lots o’ soup if you want a plate.” A most delicate and kindly way of inviting us to dine. We declined, only because we had already cooked and partaken of our own. We lay in the sun out of the wind. “Cracks” about the Forth, the Tay, the fish, the wind, and the sea wore on the day. Some of the captains had a dispute among themselves as to the distance and course from Tyne-mouth to Buchanness. After due discussion, without definite conclusion, appeal was made to the tribunal of the *Silver Cloud*. From my books I got

the longitude and latitude of the two places, worked out the problem, and handed them the distance in miles, and the magnetic course. Some of them had been right, but all acquiesced in this deliverance as final, there being no further appeal.

They went to sea late in the afternoon, making me feel lonely, and I repaired to the church, to give the address at the prayer-meeting as requested, where I had officiated on Sabbath. After preaching here the hospitality of the gentlemen composing the congregation showed that it had no bounds. How it comes let metaphysicians tell—somehow the sermon and the sail charmingly commingled in their minds; we were invited to their homes, the “good things of this life” were set before us with unsparing hand, and the question was not only “What will you have?” but “What could I give you hence that would be of use on board?” When kindness is shown you by an entire stranger you feel as if you had sailed into heaven. It is the most divine thing on earth. I thought my friend’s “lines had fallen in pleasant places.” Leaving the palace of one of these merchant princes where we had tasted the very cream of kindness, we sought the couch of our choice in the lone harbour, and sailed next morning all the more willingly that our Cockenzie friends were already on the sea.

Thursday, 31st.—A glorious morning, and we are

in Sunderland Bay by five o'clock, with all sail set. The rising sun gilded the rocks with living gold, and the sparkling terraces, the summer residences of the rich, which overhung the blue waters, the ornaments of human art—and the wild rocks and bold headlands flung up by Nature in fantastic forms strove as to which should look most grand. But we sat upon a mirror of glass. It was so calm that we only made Seaham, 5 miles south of Sunderland, by eight o'clock, when the tidal stream turned northward, and I found that to stay at sea was to be drifted back whence we came. Keeping the chart out of sight, I asked my little "mannie" where he thought the entrance was, and he pointed out a place which I knew was on the wrong side altogether of the harbour walls, but where they told us afterwards a yacht had three weeks ago landed, and in twelve hours gone to splinters, the three men in charge of her being saved; and all that remains of her now is the iron keel, which is offered for the very moderate sum of £1 sterling. Going forward to drop the anchor in the harbour here my mate had mistaken himself for the anchor, and plunged in instead. I thought the splash was unlike the wonted ring of the anchor, looked round, and, behold! shoulders above water, he was holding on by the small boat. All the horrors that could possibly rise from earth like a wave rushed in upon my soul, bringing the perspiration; for if the

lad had been drowned on this voyage, in addition to my honest paternal grief, hundreds would not have hesitated to point me out as a murderer for undertaking the cruise at all. The waters were calm, there was no current, there was no danger, and his powers of swimming, which I knew were very good, were not at all required. He gave me a look from his amphibious position, as much as to say, "Don't put yourself about; I'll soon be out of here without any assistance." But this incident was the ground for many a caution afterwards. Carelessly falling overboard when we were in "a sea" was our greatest danger; yet I had rather fall over the gunwale of a small boat than tumble off the top of an omnibus or get a pitch out of a gig on the hard road.

CHAPTER VI.

Setting sail from Seaham—Hartlepool Ahead—Pilotage—Among the Methodists—Whitby—Origin of the Abbey—View from the Cliffs—Pytheas—2300 Years Ago—An Ayrshire Tea.

The small town of Seaham, principally depending on the trade of the port, reminded us of our own Troon, on the west coast, only Seaham is not nearly so pretty.

Hartlepool, 15 miles from Sunderland, could easily have been reached if we had left Sunderland when the fishers left it on Wednesday afternoon; but somehow it was fixed in our minds that the morning was the only time for us to start. If, however, you let a favourable breeze which has sprung up in the afternoon go without you, you may look for it again in vain for eight days to come.

I had just written the above words on Friday afternoon when I observed the wind had shifted to west, or west-sou'-west, and though it is after four o'clock, instead of making tea we prepare to sail for Hartlepool.

The whole sail is up, well set, and we are under way, when, behold, a vessel's cable across the har-

bour. "*Camellia*, ahoy," is roared with stentorian voice; but the *Camellia's* captain was one of your "sour plums," and would not slacken his rope. "Coot it," cried a voice from the shore. The advice was well meant, but we preferred a less cutting solution of the difficulty. Some boathook manipulation and we were free.

The wind rose, came in strong gusts from the shore, and for comfort we shorten sail as we dash at great speed along the coast, whilst the spray comes bounding and hissing over the weather-bow. In one hour the subject that becomes all-absorbing is—How to enter Hartlepool. Here, again, an amateur from the North without close attention to the chart would close his career. You see away ahead the rocks and houses stretching out into the sea, and on your right, just at hand, a cluster of ships' masts in the harbour, and you might be tempted to think that you could sail straight for them; but look out for delusions of this kind. The most notable instance of this was at Aldborough. As we passed that place we saw the masts of the ships in the harbour actually within half a mile of us *as the crow flies*, but there were eighteen miles between us and them *as the ship sails*.

Here we must still hold southward, clear all the land points in view, open up Tees Bay, beat a mile or so to windward, and then reach away in—steering in the very opposite direction to that which we

are steering now. Hey, what a mixture of wind and water as we open up the bay! But Neptune can only spit; he has not room to raise his arm; and the blankets in which we are to sleep are snugly wrapped in the good tarpaulin.

We thread our way amongst busy tugs and proud tall ships, which are a great annoyance, and show all willingness to play a game with us at collision, and more especially since from the odds to begin with it is quite clear how the game would go. All such offers we deliberately decline, though the refusal should "put us about." For this, however, they perhaps render ample compensation, for to the stranger as they sail out and in they mark with certainty the safe entrance. Each has a pilot of the port on board, and though our skipper universally kept his resolve to invest the functions of pilot and captain in one and the same person—which he was quite at liberty to do, seeing the *Silver Cloud* was not insured, yet he never seemed to think it beneath his dignity, when he got the opportunity in entering these strange ports, to follow a pilot at the distance. But pilot or no pilot, we know that, after having the old town bearing about north, we dash away in keeping black buoys *on the right*, and white or chequered on the port. Let Scotch yachtsmen or amateur mariners observe this change in the system of buoyage when they sail into the waters that encircle the

English shores. We found ourselves in a splendid harbour; and though the wind rose to a gale and wildly howled through the tall masts that rose around us, rocked by any little swell that came up the harbour, we were soon sound asleep among the dry blankets, leaving the other *wetables* of our cabin to be dried next morning in the sun.

A fisher had moored his big boat to windward of us on Saturday afternoon, and on Sabbath morning we observed she was dragging her anchor, and her guillotine iron bow coming down on us. So after breakfast and worship we had to shift our house for security to windward of the fisher. Our floating home thus insured, we took the first chapel we came to, which was a Methodist, with anniversary services. A young minister from Leeds conducted the services superbly. He was a genius. The opening hymn began thus—

“ Author of faith, Eternal Word,
Whose Spirit breathes the active flame ;
Faith, like its finisher and Lord,
To-day as yesterday the same ;
To thee our humble hearts aspire,
And ask the gift unspeakable,
Increase in us the kindled fire,
In us the work of faith fulfil.”

Calvinism pure; and the Methodists are all Calvinists when they pray. And if the hymns and prayers be Calvinistic, the sermon not very anti-Calvinistic, and

the heart clearly in the whole, surely the Calvinist is making too much of his distinctive tenets if he cannot join heartily here. A sweet Sabbath-day.

Monday, 4th June, 4 A.M.—Wind, if any, from the west or west-sou'-west, and we are dropping down the harbour to stretch across the mouth of the Tees. Big steamers moved to and fro in the gray dawn, and formed a silent panorama, like the vista of a dream. The morning mist hung on the waters, but, steering sou'-east by sou', we soon had the Yorkshire land "aboard." As the sun ascended the usual summer seaside splendour appeared amongst the lofty crags which lifted themselves up and overhung the waters between 600 and 700 feet high, the sublime results of nature and the splendid achievements of human architecture again alternately demanding our astonished gaze.

We are off Whitby by 10 A.M. Scarborough, we know, is keeping letters for us, and thither we desire to go. But occasionally your desire is of very little account, and the sooner you roll it up with your chart the better, and lay it past for another day. The tide now turned, the wind went into the south, and after beating for hours we had to enter Whitby late in the afternoon when the tide suited, and moored fore and aft in the river.

Now blew a hurricane. Further south they had it a day or two before us, for we read, "At Epsom

a tent blown down, and a man and a boy killed." It soon went north, for we read again, "A fishing smack off the coast of Lewis caught in a storm, lost, and all her crew of eight drowned." But a blast from the south or sou'-west does not affect the harbour, and so we have enjoyed a good sleep on board, and must see the town. Whitby, with its river harbour, its scant shipping, its bridge, its old town on the one bank, its new town on the other, and its steady-going people, reminded us of Ayr. Its modern lustre is derived from the far-famed production and polish of its jet ornaments. But Whitby shines brightly away far back in the history of the past, and with a lustre more splendid than that of the jet. The reader must ascend with me about 200 steps leading to the venerable church perched on the rock. The cliff rises 300 feet perpendicularly above the sea, and here, as its ornamented crown seen from far, are the magnificent ruins of the ancient abbey.

Penda, the champion of Paganism about the middle of the seventh century, was overthrown by Oswy, where their armies met on the battlefield of Winwidfield, near Leeds. The victor, as an expression of his gratitude, devoted his infant daughter to the cloister, and made an ample donation of lands to found a religious house, and hence arose an establishment on this lofty rock looking down upon the sea, one of the most celebrated abbeys of the middle

ages. Caedmon, the "Father of English song," the first metrical author in our vernacular tongue, was a resident here. He died about 680. His composition is a kind of religious hymn, celebrating the Creator's praise. So that English song began with the praise of God, and began on the rock where now we stand. The ruins of the abbey that still stand here, with their ornamented stone arches, many of which are entire, rising towards the sky, form one of the most august monuments I have ever seen of ancient architecture. But, altogether independently of art, Nature has given this bold eminence a view of the sea far excelling anything I had ever in my life enjoyed, though I have stood on the top of Goat-fell, in the Isle of Arran, and I have viewed the ocean from the lighthouse of the May. The cliff is not too high for distinctly discerning the objects on the water below, and it is perfectly perpendicular, so that nothing intervenes between you and the sea. The ships lie at your foot, and the comprehensive view right and left of the coast is very grand.

Elevated 300 feet above the water, the curvature of the ocean, on account of the sphericity of the globe, permits a full view of objects on the sea at the distance of twenty nautical—that is, twenty-three English—miles.

Here the natives would descry, while still away in the distance, the dreaded Danes who came, saw,

conquered, overturned, and ultimately changed the name of their town Streaneshalch into White Town, or Whitby.

But, reader, go back with me 400 years before the beginning of the Christian era. There we see a Grecian, Pytheas by name, on a voyage of discovery sail down the Mediterranean. He boldly passes the Pillars of Hercules, braves the Bay of Biscay, bears down the English Channel, rounds the forelands of Kent; but how changed the boundaries of our island home since then! What side of the Goodwins he took—whether they then bridged over the four miles of water called the Downs, and were joined to Kent, I cannot say; but this we know, they were not sands under sea then—nay, 1000 years after his cruise they were good solid land, being part of the Earl of Kent's estate. But Pytheas must have neared the coast off Whitby. A rumour runs among these hills that some strange spectre is heaving in view, moving northward along the waters. Let us suppose now that among our painted sires we repair for a view to this elevated rock. O how my heart would swell as the illustrious stranger, under full sail, pressed past on the waters below! Hurrah! hurrah! Pytheas! Blow softly on him, ye southern winds, he craves a close view of the coast. Here was daring and adventure! In six days from the English Channel he reached the

Orkneys, without chart, compass, or lighthouse beam! But hush the promptings of ignorance, ye old women of Greece; call him not hard names, and say he is tempting Jove. He knows what he is doing. That man can read his road home by the sky! He is one of the profoundest mathematicians, a contemporary and fellow-countryman of the famous Aristotle. The stars, his guides, were then as steady. The sights of nature that met his eye must have been similar to those that greet our own. The firmament then glowed as bright with "living sapphires." Nay, if this vesture of the Almighty "waxeth old as doth a garment," the "patines of bright gold" that stud the canopy were brighter then—less worn by three-and-twenty hundred years. The "Queen of Night," as peerless then, "unveiled her light, and o'er the dark her silver mantle threw." As supremely beautiful then were the molten silver of a moonlit sea, and the tints with which the headlands of the coast were touched. The sun "beginning his golden progress in the east" reveals each time to the admiring eyes of the learned Greek some headland or some estuary far famed in future years. Then flowed the Forth as fair a thousand years ere "Edina" rose, or Edwin, the founder of our capital, was born. The silver Tay, leaving his home amid the rugged wilds, pursues his silent course to ocean—the "Fair City" yet unborn, Juteopolis uncon-

ceived in human thought. Of Abernethy, seat of ancient Pictish kings, we shall not speak. But dash on, brave Pytheas, and, northward bound, in safety cut the crystal wave.

But I must leave the sublime eminence of the Whitby Rock. We shall not return, however, by the usual way—that is, by the 200 steps. We shall descend by one bold leap to the comfortable and commonplace. Well, here goes. But I promise to drop my reader into such a soft sweet spot that in the fall he shall not be hurt, unless made of something else than flesh and blood and bones. The captain has got his wind out about Pytheas, and the whole crew of the *Silver Cloud* have disappeared, say half an hour ago, leaving you to rest upon the rock and ruminate. Now, just conceive yourself in the dining-room of one of the beautiful buildings among the trees in the grander and more modern portion of Whitby. There you find a minister and his lady just returned the day before from Ayrshire, to which shire they both belong, where they have been spending their holidays. They have brought something with them of an eatable sort to remind them, as long as it lasts, of the land of their birth, and with the warmest hospitality they are sharing it with the crew of the *Silver Cloud*. In short, we are having a hearty “crack” about “langsyne,” not nearly so far back as the time of Pytheas, and at same time

enjoying a splendid Ayrshire tea, with oat-cakes baked in the Land o' Burns, and splendid Ayrshire beef ham!

Now, reader, are you hurt with this fall from the sublimity of the rock so suddenly among the bannocks? Are you? Then I must leave you to recover before I speak to you again.

CHAPTER VII.

Hard beating—Scarboro'—Sighting Flamboro'—Bridlington—Old Richard—Richard counteracts the Croakers—"Appy as a laddie"—The Canvas and the Cloth.

By 3 A.M. on 6th June we dropped down the harbour of Whitby, and resolved to make way south. The wind soon settled in the sou'-sou'-west, and gradually increased to a strength unprecedented in our experience. The small boat was here a great encumbrance. I now determined to try what the *Silver Cloud* could do against a strong head wind and wave, the more so that Scarborough was only 17 miles from Whitby, and should it become overwhelmingly boisterous ere I reached the former I could slack the sheet at any time, and run back to the latter in the fragment of an hour.

I reefed four times; but even after that the crests of the waves struck the weather bow, and everything on board was treated to a hundred spray baths, except the contents of the good tarpaulin. The lee gunwale would suddenly sink in the boiling brine, when crash upon the deck came a volume of water, which, rattling along the thin board cover of our cabin, launched itself with all its might exultingly

at our feet into the open part of our ship. Reef and pump, pump and reef, whilst blackening the sea in their course came the "lumps" (the marine designation for heavy sudden gusts) along the waters as if fired by some fiend from Scarborough Castle, our destination being behind the very battery from which they seemed to be shot. At length we reached a point in the sea from which we considered we could clear the Scarborough Rock and drop round into the harbour, when the bow of our ship was turned accordingly, and we soon found ourselves with the choice of two harbours in the grandest by far of the Yorkshire watering-places.

Out of the wet clothes into the dry blankets, after a warm jug of tea, was the safest and sweetest course now for the whole crew. Sleep sealed their lips, and for the time being fishermen and foreigners, boatmen and boarders, were left to their own conjectures as to the whence and the whither of the small stranger. Next morning the wind has gone to sleep, and the warm sun wakes us as he spreads his glory along the bay. Look at Scarborough first from our boat. We sit upon the calm blue waters of the bay. This blue is fringed with a semicircle of gold, and from the edge of this golden sand rises the town of Scarborough in the form of a magnificent amphitheatre. Right in front of us, and standing on the edge of the sand, is the great glittering hotel, and above it,

rising tier upon tier, are buildings like the best parts of Edinburgh. To our left are the Spa, the ornamental Cliff Bridge, the aquarium, and other buildings—all rising the one above the other, up, up, till your eye reaches the lofty terraces that crown the cliffs sparkling in the blue with silver sheen. On the right, at the bottom, is the harbour. Then above it and terminating the semicircle rises the bold rock, nearly 300 feet, bearing aloft the ruins of the castle and remaining battlements of this ancient stronghold.

But when we speak of Scarborough as being like an amphitheatre, with its vast concave towards the sea, you must picture an amphitheatre with the seats all alive and full of people most gorgeously apparelled, with their faces all turned to look down upon the blue arena or stage where sits the *Silver Cloud*. The face of each house or building—i.e. the principal windows and the side with the grandest ornamentation—looks down on the water. This is their proud boast—their greatest commendation—for we read everywhere as we ramble through the streets such as this—"Mrs. England's lodgings, *with a sea view*." This remark applies to all these splendid watering-places. For example, at Broadstairs and Ramsgate, which are within a few hours' run of royalty, the combined glance of the glittering architecture is completely overwhelming. Steamers don't come so

near as to experience the effect of this multiplied magnificence from the simultaneous view of the face of such grandeur. The poor train, of course, comes in at the back of the town, and is innocent of the whole concern. But in a boat such as we sail the grandest of the grand is hung out before our gaze as we skim along the lovely blue with its border of bright gold.

We stroll through the town, but among even the finest shops fail to find the carcass of our favourite, the Wiltshire grumphy. They are just going to have it. The season is just going to commence when they could sell anything at so high a price.

We have had the view *from* the sea. We can have the "sea view" too without taking the lodgings. So we perch ourselves on the green slope running up to the castle about 200 feet high; and it strikes us that, view it as you please, Scarborough looks well, with its palatial hotels, its magnificent aquarium (which we have inspected), its ornamental bridges, its massy churches, sparkling terraces, picturesque harbour, and beautiful sandy bay. Here you have for hire droves of genteel donkeys, perfect gentlemen in comparison with donkeys I had seen; big perambulators for adults at 1s. 6d. for the first hour and 1s. an hour thereafter, drawn or pushed by a human horse; boats; and men either to carry you through the water on their backs or in their

boats; and ponies innumerable, saddled on the sands, all to meet the tastes and talents of wealthy visitors. And last, though certainly not least, on this bright, warm, sunny morning you have the *Silver Cloud*, with her blankets, all white and new, hung aloft or spread out above deck to air, and all the other *dry-ables*, adding her quota to the gay variety, and doubtless making her mark in the range of glasses that may be directed from the windows and balconies above.

Monday, 11th.—West wind. Started at 5 A.M. The beauty of this morning's scenery is indescribable. So saith the log. Nine miles brings us to Filey Brig, which is guarded by a bell-buoy. Away behind is Filey Bay. Filey itself sits on the hill behind in lofty dignity and great beauty. The sun was peering through the early fleecy clouds, and six miles in advance now shone over the blue waters the white rocks of Flamborough Head. As the rocks whiten so does the sand of course, which is made from them, and so does the soil all as you go south. But this is the northern extremity, the first appearance to a Scotchman of the chalk rocks that gird the shores of England. When we started we had high hopes for the Humber, 50 miles on; but we get becalmed off Flamborough, and lie helpless in the hot calm noon just where James I. of Scotland, on his way to France for education, was taken captive, 472 years

ago, by Bolingbroke, Henry IV. of England. The beautiful bay of Bridlington sweeps away from Flamborough in a westerly direction, the harbour being about six miles from the Head, and thither now we turn our thoughts—only our thoughts, however, for the wind is not strong enough to carry any more. By-and-by there is a little puff from the east, and along the lovely, far-famed sand we enjoy a pure pleasure sail; then a sudden turn of the helm, and we are in a harbour of some acres, which we have nearly all to ourselves.

Richard Bedlington is an old sailor, who lives partly by hiring himself and boat to pleasure parties. He had manifested a kindly spirit to us from the moment we rounded the pier. The simple *dead-eye* gear for the lug-sheet was slow murder in a breeze, and in replacing it with two blocks and tackle Richard's advice and information as to where these and other such things could be found was of some value. Hence gratitude invited him to tea on board the *Silver Cloud*. As the steward spread a towel on the low seat, "Ah," said Richard, "'ee's 'avin company to-day, so we've to 'ave a covered table." But when he saw, without coal or stick, smoke or soot, the kettle steaming in two minutes, and the "'am and heggs" fried in about the same time, he declared he 'ad been "hover" a good bit of the world, but he 'adn't seen "hanything" like that. Tea over he lit

his pipe, and gave the first scent of tobacco to the inside of the small cabin. Now that his *gun* was going, the combined effect of the two weeds sent Richard into that state of mind in which we contemplate things only on their sunny side—that is, if they have any sunny side at all to contemplate. Along with two or three big spittles he let some things fall which were picked up and remembered in all time coming with the deepest gratitude and comfort by the whole of the crew. Evidently eyeing the breadth of beam now that he was inside, the green cushions, nautical instruments, and cooking apparatus, he said, “I wish I was going with ye to France. And look ’ere skipper, I wouldn’t be too particular about an off-shore wind. Them heasterly winds, especially this time of year, are often as steady and as nice as you please. Man, I could go with ye to France, ay, as ’appy as a laddie.” And it was often necessary to recall this speech. For in port after port as we answered the question, “From whence to where?” we got invariably such rejoinders as the following, “You are not afraid;” “You have a nerve;” “Sell her now that you have done so well and go ’ome with the train.” For several days groups of fishermen gathered on Scarborough piers discussing the subject, “From Dundee to France in that!” One old boatbuilder in Yarmouth was more pointed. Lifting his mallet and suiting the action

to the word, he said, "Four young men built a boat themselves and rigged her. I told them she'd be their coffin. Well, just as I said it they went out there, a squall upset them, and they were all drowned. And look 'ere, it will be the very same with you." "'Ow?" yelled another at his back, "'ow would you do in a breeze of wind?" I generally assumed the learner's position and mentally took notes, but feeling myself a little bitten, I answered the last question by submitting another—"Do you think there has not been a breeze of wind since we left Dundee?" But sometimes they loaded me with the above crushing material so much that when I stepped on board again you would have thought she would sink in the harbour without going out to sea at all. When it came to the worst we shouted out, "Remember Richard, 'appy as a laddie." If it had suited to call at Bridlington Quay on my return (although I do not use tobacco), I certainly would not have denied myself the great gratification of purchasing a pound of the best black roll for Richard. Many a time we triumphantly mounted a threatening wave with the words, "'appy as a laddie."

Having enveloped ourselves in oilskins we are enjoying our first really wet day, sauntering musingly on the pier among the harbour paraphernalia, when a Wesleyan clergyman, here on holiday business, supposing me a veritable tar, approached, and

grinningly holding his face up to the heavens, exclaims, "I say, master, is this rain going to continue?" After some talk about the weather we fell into other conversation. At first there was no apparent affinity; but the oilskins knew well the themes congenial to the white choker, and we very soon landed amongst matters ecclesiastical. Amongst other things the reverend gentleman declared that he had been reading and reading, but he could not for his life make out the difference between the Free and the U.P. churches in Scotland. Whereupon the man in oilskins in a single sentence made the distinction clear.

By-and-by, looking out from below the flannel lining of my yellow sou'-wester, I said, "You would not take me for a minister?" "Ah, I don't know," said he, "if you had off the oilskins." "Then," I replied, "you still would see nothing distinctive of the clerical office if you mean above the skin."

Most wretched! If he had been a clergyman of the Church of England; but a Methodist to make the clerical gift or qualification consist in the shape and colour of your clothing, especially after I had made clear in one sentence what he admitted he could not for his life make out! Sartor Resartus, to the rescue.

With all due deference to the chimney hat, long black coat, white necktie, and umbrella, I humbly

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submit to the unprejudiced readers of the Gospels, that I, and not he, at the moment, wore the real original apostolic robes. However, he was doubtless a "jolly, good fellow," somewhat more plump than my artist has shown him in the frontispiece; might have been pardoned, though far nearer hand, had he failed to discover the difference between the Frees and U.P.'s; as for "picking up" a parson among yellow oilskins, it was an achievement not to be expected; and my Scotch clerical friends need not be afraid, I did not get cross at his allusion to my water-tight dress, but strove to represent them as good-humouredly as possible.

CHAPTER VIII.

Bridlington Quay—Mouth of the Humber—Great Grimsby—England in Consumption—Scotch Christian Hospitality—Pleasant Places—"The Deeps."

Bridlington is renowned in antiquity both for its military and its monastic establishments. Here landed, in 1643, Henrietta, Queen of Charles I., with arms and ammunition which had been purchased in Holland by the crown jewels of England to assist her husband in the civil war. Bridlington Quay is an open, pure-aired, lovely resort of the Yorkshire people, with a spacious harbour and innumerable small boats, which are heartily patronized. The ladies are the great patrons of aquatics here, and hire the boats for themselves. Occasionally you see them treat a sweetheart to a sail along the beautiful bay, who lazily sits behind, whilst the female form bends in fine style to the oar.

Wednesday, 13th, 5 A.M.—We leave the harbour with a gentle breeze from the east to enjoy a day of the most delightful sailing. Soon the sun shone through till the water glittered and twinkled like melted silver; and our course was along a lovely beach of sand, unbroken for 36 miles—it being quite

safe to keep so near that we could hear the ploughmen speaking to their horses in the fields. This proximity to the shore was also necessary to shun the stronger current of the tidal stream, which would be against us till the sun was past meridian. The wind was so light that we only made Hornsea, a distance of 10 miles, by eleven o'clock. There is no harbour nor even haven between Bridlington and Great Grimsby on the Humber, a distance of 42 nautical miles. The only element of anxiety was that, Grimsby being 6 miles up the river, unless we reached it by seven o'clock the tidal stream in the Humber would turn against us; then, unless the easterly breeze were the stronger, we might not see our old friends there—formerly of Dundee—nautical reasons leading us right onward for the Wash.

We strain every nerve setting sails, the tide turns in our favour, the breeze freshens, and away we go, naming each of the places from the chart and marking our progress as we pass along. All three meals to-day are enjoyed under sail. By six o'clock we are abreast of Spurn Point, which marks the mouth of the Humber, where the shoals and tides and cross tides are something terrible. I resolved, as usual, to take the large ship entrance, with No. 3 buoy on my starboard, thus clearing the shoals; but the tide, as if it had known better than myself what was needed—namely, sufficient water for my craft and arrival

at Grimsby by seven—lifted me right across the banks, cheating me with No. 2 buoy for No. 3, which, on detection, I did not resist, remembering that it was a spring-tide, and now almost full.

The mouth of the Humber is 5 miles broad, and we must confess to a little misgiving when on its surging, seething waters we began to picture what it might be to a craft like ours in a strong wind. But that was only imagination, and had nothing to do with this lovely evening. We flung the foul thought behind us on the ocean, bade adieu for the present to the lovely Yorkshire shore, swept across to Lincolnshire, running before wind and tide, and soon found an ample berth in the commodious docks of a place where the fishing trade is provided for in the most gigantic scale.

Coming closely along this coast, one thing struck me forcibly, namely the speed with which the North Sea is devouring England. At some places in the memory of those living as much as 40 yards have gone. And it must be so. To-day, for example, the land is on an average from 15 to 20 feet above high-water mark, and, not being rock, is entirely at the mercy of the waves. The face of the clay is so fresh as to indicate that the last slice has been taken but recently. Many of the farms along the coast will soon have disappeared. We see a pillar rising through the sand, and learn that it is the spire

of some ancient church which once was far from sea. We have spoken already of the Goodwin Sands, which we know a few centuries ago were solid land, the outer edge of which is 7 miles from the present shore. The church of Reculvers is a prominent object on the northern shore of Kent, close to the waves, and, as far as we can learn, when it was built it was 9 miles from the sea. We saw houses on the very edge of the precipice that were never built so near, and for which we would not give five years' purchase. Their doom is sealed, and the execution of it intrusted to such unwearied workmen as the salt-water wave, under the irresistible and never-diminishing sway of her serene highness the moon. The material that forms the cheerful hearth for the gleesome family of the cottar will soon constitute a haunt under water to be visited with impunity by the scaly tribes, and the triumphant sea will roar over their unknown grave; for just as the human tabernacle descends and becomes the unmolested habitation of the worms, the house of coarser material which sheltered it shall go down and become the free property of the finny monsters of the deep.

In vain you look at the southern point of Suffolk for the town of Orwell, where Isabella, the alienated and guilty wife of Edward II., landed with a band, which afterwards increased and strengthened, result-

ing not only in the foul murder of her husband, but in having the question formally submitted for the first time to a public assembly as to the deposition of a hereditary monarch, and forming a precedent for the lawyers in the notorious case of Charles I. The river Orwell, which is one of the most beautiful in England, flows on still; but in vain we looked for a vestige of the town of that name, where Isabella landed on her arrival from France only 551 years ago. So far as we could ascertain with the help of oral tradition, we sailed over it. It forms now a stony shoal at some distance from the shore on which there is water sufficient at any state of the tide to sail the *Silver Cloud*. England is in rapid consumption; her eastern lung is being eaten away. Of course I know that some places at a comparatively recent date have risen out of the sea, such as Yarmouth; but that the birth of land in one place compensates for its burial in another I think extremely doubtful.

However, one thing was clear by this time—eight P.M.—the *Silver Cloud* was safely moored in Grimsby. The wind might suit to start next morning, and though we have not the address, we must try in this large, level, strange town to see the face of our old Dundee friends before we sleep.

It was in vain we tried to pronounce the name Dunlop to an English ear. After repeating it four

times we would get the answer, "O yes, Gonlock?" and even after spelling it we had to part in despair. Yes, but there are more Scotchmen than one in Great Grimsby, and these have all heard the name before; not only so, but one Scot knows the whereabouts of another Scot, and by 9 o'clock we have found the door, and there in the twilight stand the adventurous crew. The reception baffles the pen. The mistress had left Dundee with a tear three years ago, and had never seen it since. Anybody from Dundee—that would be grand. But such an unexpected visitor, and such an uncommon way of coming! We were treated with the warmest Christian hospitality. The spirit which feels that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" lent its lustre to every act. In short, the more we could take and the more trouble we could give husband and wife we furnished them with the unmistakable conditions of greater joy. The kindness was genuine to the root. Of course we slept on board for the security of our floating home, but were commanded to give our cooking instrument a rest from the time we touched to the time we left Grimsby, and had to return next morning and continue to witness not only the determination but the power to please the palate of the Scotch strangers. "Cracks" about Dundee on all hands were eagerly enjoyed. Of course I was able to tell that the Bonnethill was

yet in the same place, and that Wellington Street was just about the same distance from it still. Does some Dundonian that sees these places every day say, "That was no news?" Man, you are no judge. If you were away three years I will not name the sum you might be willing to give just to make sure of the above facts either with your own eyes or those of some other person who had witnessed them but a few days ago.

In return I had to hear something about Great Grimsby. Unquestionably my friends had prospered. Where is the spot on the globe on which you will not find Scotchmen flourishing? They said they missed the Psalms on Sabbath in church; however, they sing them at home.

The lady said she could get Dundee marmalade, but the great want was F——'s biscuits and scones. Well, I happened to be so intimate with the Dundee biscuit manufacturer whose name she so warmly used that I possessed some of his receipts, and seeing that he never uses the rail to scatter his products athwart the kingdoms, but contents himself with the appreciative patronage of Dundee and neighbourhood, I thought that, without offence to him, I might give her the receipt for the scones; and ever since she has been delighting not only her husband, but the friends and neighbours who have the fortune to enjoy a cup of tea under this hospitable roof, with

the addition of a real Grimsby-Dundee-Glasgow scone.

"How will you cross the Deeps?" (*i.e.* the Wash), was the cry raised by the Broughty-Ferry fishermen from the first hour that they learned I was thinking on this voyage. Now for the answer. The straight way is from Flamborough Head to Cromer, 90 miles, the nearest available ports being Scarborough and Yarmouth, distant from each other 130 miles. But in nautical parlance, we resolved to "make a short Deeps of it."

The readers with map at hand will see that I have already cut 30 off the 90 at the mouth of the Humber, being 30 miles nearer Cromer than we were at Flamborough Head.

The sequel shall complete the answer as to how we passed that part of the waters which sailors, indulging in a license for a strange perversion of language, call "The Deeps," but which in reality is an instance of the most gigantic shoals. Then we shall soon reach "*parlez-vous*."

CHAPTER IX.

Coast of Lincoln—Dangers—Wainfleet—Artificial Limbs—Tumbled out of Bed—Wainfleet Harbour—Loneliness.

Friday, 15th June.—Wind fresh from east-sou'-east, which, after beating out of the Humber, and taking our course, would be two points before the beam; so we leave Grimsby by ten o'clock, hoping to reach Wainfleet, a distance of 40 miles.

We were advised by the captain of a yacht to keep close along the shore, only avoiding broken water, and all would be well. But for your life, always prefer printed to oral instruction, unless when the oral confirms or explains what you are learned enough to read. I knew that the Rosse Sand, off Saltfleet, extends 3 miles seaward, and that a passage may be made between it and the mainland, especially at certain states of the tide; but this passage is marked on the chart in some places with only the fraction of a fathom. The "Sailing Directions" say—"There is scarcely a passage for a boat at low water." Observe, too, we must be there at ebb, as we intend to take the benefit of the tide when it rises and sets for the Wash, and to-day the water will

recede to the lowest, it being spring-tide. Besides all this, we are on a lee shore, with a fresh breeze, and such a sea as in these circumstances rises on a sandy shoal. Between Donna Nook and Saltfleet we keep the lead going till we find ourselves in only 7 feet of water, and the ribs of a wreck, like a marine scarecrow, about half-a-mile ahead, when, rather than run further risk of thumping the bottom out of the *Silver Cloud*, seeking the shore in the small boat, gathering up what articles we valued, and could rescue from the breakers, and going per rail to Dundee, we turned, beat out a mile or two, cleared the bank, and neared the coast again when our paper guides, confirmed by the lead line, told us that such could be done with safety.

By the afternoon the tide turned to flow south, the wind rose and roused the sea, and now we dash through it after the style of a steamer. Banks to the right of us, banks to the left of us, volleyed and thundered. The Wash is 11 miles wide at its narrowest, the channels being the Linn and the Boston Deep. Five miles up the Boston Deep there is a swatchway through the banks into Wainfleet. But it was not necessary to enter Boston Deep at all. Dashing along the Lincolnshire coast 30 miles after leaving the Humber, calculating to keep $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the shore, we expect Boston Bar buoy on our port, and the Black Can buoy on our starboard, which

guards Skegness Middle Sand. These are sighted and kept equidistant. Then we steer sou'-west about 5 miles, keeping between Boston Knocks and the main, looking out for the black buoys that point the way to Wainfleet harbour. These 5 miles would be sailed in half an hour, the tide now with us, the wind on our quarter, and the water smooth, being broken by the Boston Knock Sands, which lie roaring away to windward. We soon "pick up" the black buoys, our starboard guides, but in vain we look as we fly along for the black and white buoys that should appear on the port to mark the little channel into Wainfleet. These buoys are gone. The truth is it is a forsaken and forgotten place, with a narrow little serpentine channel a mile long, winding round all the points of the compass through the sand, and drying out about half tide; and here I stick aground. Nothing daunted, the tide is rising; we fling out an anchor, push off the dingey, sound for the channel with an oar; and after this survey, our vessel having sufficient water, we sail into the harbour.

A solitary man appears, the coastguard, believing he has netted a live smuggler.

Plenty of water to float us at all states of tide has several times been named as one of the good qualities of a harbour. The reader will now get the reason.

A boat cannot stand on land without legs any more than a man. We have the legs, which we screw on when we know the harbour dries out, so that she stands upright on these, our beds not being tumbled all to one side or upset by her lying on her bilge.

A man, however, can stand on a slope. How? He shortens one leg just in proportion as it is less or more steep. A boat can do things as wonderful at sea. She sits on a slope of water better than he, and mounts each of the multitudinous and multiform waves from the ripple to the swollen billow as if by instinct, rising each time no more than the exact height to make her leap perfect. But she is not up to shortening one leg. They are only stick legs, and she cannot stand on a slope more than a man could with stick legs—the great inconvenience, as I apprehend, alike to boat and body being that the stick leg cannot be bent and shortened at will. No shame to her then, if, when taken out of her own element on to the peculiar human vantage-ground, she cannot do what is beyond the power of the human body, with its boasted intelligence, should it, like her, be supplied only with artificial legs.

The coastguard was wrong when he said that the place where we anchored was level at the bottom. At midnight I awoke feeling that our little world was all going wrong, the centre of gravity shifting

from the keel to the gunwale, all things tumbling to the one side, and in such cases just as likely that the mate and his bed are tumbled over on the captain as that the captain and his bed are rolled over on the mate, there being no respect of persons either with the tide or the laws of gravitation. I look out, and, behold, we are grounding on a most steep slope—so steep that I think it possible she may be tumbled upside down; and, then, where would we find egress? After satisfying myself that she is going over no further, I make my bed with the right inclination, and resume the warm blankets. Next morning about seven the tide rises, rights the ship, and we are gently, as if by clock-work, rolled out of our bed the opposite way, when the following dialogue takes place:—Captain—“How could you sleep last night after she awoke you canting over, and before you saw she would not be entirely capsized?” Mate—“Because I knew the mast must be broken before the ground could close the hatch.” Good for the mate. The old chap was outwitted that time.

We are now at the sou'-east point of Lincolnshire, in sight of the Suffolk hills, in a forsaken harbour formed by the mouth of the little stream Steeping, about 300 miles from Dundee, probably 400 or 500 by rail; four houses at hand, the coastguard's, a sailor's, a griever's, and a farm; no other house within a mile—no shop or church within 5 miles.

Two or three years ago some Dutchmen had landed, plundered the place, and carried their brutality so far that it resulted in a woman dying afterwards in the asylum. There was a shyness at first, which to us was observable, for certainly there was nothing in the rig either of our boat or our bodies to indicate that we were Britons on a pleasure excursion—our boat having but a tanned lugsail, and our canvas trousers partaking of the same colour from necessary contact with the anchor chain. And who would shave at sea? I had discarded the razor, only however since I left Dundee, so that my beard had assumed that stubble-like appearance which makes a man for all the world like a hedgehog. Nor was there any inducement to don your “braws” here, unless you could afford to fling them overboard next time you were going to bed, for, attempting to go ashore when the tide was ebbcd, holding on by the gunwale, we found that the mud came above the knees, and if we let go and took another step, who could tell as yet but we would go over head? Just imagine a man with fine clothes drawing up his anchor from among this mud. When Peter the Great wrought in an English shipbuilding yard he wore the garb of a common carpenter, but he did not cease all the while to be Peter the Great. We like occasionally to hold at defiance that greatness which is the sole production of the tailor.

No doubt we had coarse biscuits and water on board to serve a week, but a little more luxury than these is sought by the poorest of our race. It is Saturday morning; we must stay here till Monday; we must find provisions; moreover, we must carry away as much as keep us right till we sight the next port; and so we must go ashore.

I have heard of a great speaker whose physique was so ungainly that he said it took the first ten minutes to speak his appearance away; but after getting within easy tongue-reach, I managed it in less time; for, notwithstanding my mate had gone on a vain search for milk, returning with empty pitcher and the declaration of the coastguard that milk could not be obtained for love or money, the three families here never seeing such a thing from one end of the year to the other, yet by a little management of that wonderful instrument the tongue, fresh fish without a fisherman, bread without a baker, butter without a shop, bacon without a butcher, and a flowing supply of milk came on board every day. The coastguard kindly sold me a large loaf, the grievé's sons fished and presented the results, and the old lady of the farm, who, "from the one year's end to the other," remains inexorable to the natives, at length yielded to the stranger's tongue, fixing the price of the milk at $1\frac{1}{2}d.$, but always filling the vessel I sent for it, however large. Nor was

this the only place, where, after due application, we became the solitary favoured mortals in the milk line.

The one that required most coaxing was the sailor's wife, whose husband was from home, and whose walls were hung with plump pictures of his supreme Fatness, the King of England's larder. She pled that she never had sold any. I answered it was rare for me to buy, and after spending sufficient breath on her I left, saying I would give her an hour to think about it, and then I would send up my lad with the money. The lad was duly sent, and returned with the home-cured bacon. I travelled $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles inland, and secured 1s. worth of eggs. The reader will know how far we were out of the way (I mean out of the way of rails, of trade, of summer visitors) when I tell him we purchased new churned butter at 8d. per pound; so that in the *Silver Cloud* we seem here to have sailed into the last century.

Sabbath morning after breakfast and prayers, we dressed in nearly our best to call on one or two of the families within reach and ask how they did on Sabbath, and where there was Divine service. Doubtless we regarded ourselves now clothed so as to command respect; but after talking to one of the old ladies in the sunshine and on the green fragrant carpet nature had so beautifully spread before her

door, and hearing with a sigh of her sons that were far away, and possibly strangers at some other body's home—thinking we were getting on splendidly, I looked round to see how my little man was enjoying the conversation, when, behold—the result of having no mirror on board—he had on his hat the wrong way! the loops which we invariably keep behind were seriously perched above his brow. Away now a full month from female surveillance, what odd things the old dame saw about me she herself would be best able to tell, unless I talked them away; that is, unless she remembers better something that I said than something that she saw.

“I hear no Sabbath bell awake the Sabbath morn.”

We have no church within 5 miles, no preacher; but in the quietness of a summer solitude like this, when the din of the world has died away, everything seems vocal with the voice of God. The sun shone in the same splendour with which he shines on fairer, richer, busier spots of earth. So the same great God would hear a prayer, or the psalm we sung, in the midst of this lonely marsh as willingly as He would listen to chants, and hymns, and prayers that rise from sculptured walls, with painted glass and drapery grand, with organ sound.

We were in the great temple not “made with hands” whose architecture speaks divinity, with its

celestial canopy of blue, rolling curtains of fire, and matchless drapery of interwoven azure green and gold. The breath of summer wafted our prayers on high, and from the great sea rolled forth the organ sound that mingled with our praise.

CHAPTER X.

Shoals—Crossing the Wash—A Night on the Norfolk Coast—
Flying Along—Yarmouth Ahead—Making the Harbour—The
Silver Cloud and Crew seen through English eyes—Off Again—
“Strong Ripples” at Orfordness—Too Late.

From Wainfleet we must now steer for Blakeney. The dangers in the way are the banks on each side of Boston Deep; Burnham Flats, extending 10 miles from Norfolk shore, and drying in some parts; Docking Shoal, and other flats, shoals, and overfalls too tedious to relate, all with murder in their power, and bearing on their breasts, if you could lift the watery covering to see, the ribs of boats and men, and some of these not long from Scotland. The upper side of the water, however, is beautiful, with it alone have we to do, and by keeping on that side is our safety. Notwithstanding the additional inconvenience of a wind from seaward, nor'-east, which is also a head-wind, but with a strong ebb-tide in our favour, by 11 A.M. on Monday we sail out of the forlorn harbour of Wainfleet. When the tide was low we had made a survey of the narrow shallow channel winding through the sand at the entrance here; and so our pilotage, to begin with, was perfect. We cross

Boston Deep, entering by the swatchway, marked by a black and white buoy, and leave it on the other side between two sands called respectively the Inner and the Outer Dog Head. Leaving Linn Well light-ship astern, we stretch across Linn Deep, sight the Woolpack buoy off Brancaster, keeping the Norfolk land on the starboard, with the knowledge that I must keep 10 miles of water between if I am to clear the Burnham Flats. It is no use saying this was not necessary. If from the time we leave Wainfleet we are to take the benefit of the ebb-tide, it is clear we must be in the locality of these shoals when the tide is fully ebbcd, which makes all the difference between sailing smoothly over a bank and getting wrecked and drowned on it.

If there were never such a thing as a wreck occurring, then to some reckless advice we might give ear. But there are wrecks to right and left of us, wrecks of mighty ships too, behind and in front of us, taking place not one day's sailing distant. True, if you give me the choice of a grave, I prefer a fine sandy bank, strewn with the shells of ocean, and the blue lone sea for a covering, to the black filthy mud and worms—the common conclusion to a landsman's life. But not yet. We know something of the intensity of soul bitterness experienced in sudden bereavement, and we guard our life in mercy for a few affectionate friends on whom our sudden departure would fall

with the most withering effect. If you wish to become a semi-suicide—doing one-half yourself—these shoals will complete the job with the greatest despatch. But not wishing anything of the kind, but rather to sail to France and back, we dispense with all carelessness, endeavour to sight the buoys, and keep to the channels approved of by the proper authorities, the more so that the seaward breeze to-day makes it doubtful whether, in case we had to leave the *Silver Cloud* on a shoal, the small dingey, loaded with the whole crew, could live on such a sea.

With the help of the tide, having beat as far to nor'-east as we thought necessary, we now shape our course for Blakeney—sou'-east some 20 miles. We are abreast of what we suppose to be Blakeney between nine and ten o'clock evening. The tide would have suited to enter, and we could have groped our way in, as the water was smooth, but we did not see the entrance, probably for a most potent reason—we did not wish to see it.

We reasoned—it would only be dark about three hours, the moon would stand half that time, we were now clear of the flats, actually across "the Deeps," we had only been at sea since 11 A.M., the tide would be with us four hours, Yarmouth was only 42 miles ahead, keeping Dundee letters now eight or ten days old, and Cromer light 12 miles

ahead, flashing over the dark wave beckons us on. The unanimous vote of the crew was that we proceed, so Blakeney is left in the dusk behind. By two in the morning we are becalmed abreast of the lighthouse. By six o'clock from the tidal current I discover that the surest way to make progress is to make sure that we stand still; so at a respectable distance from the beach, we drop anchor, go ashore in the dingey, speak to some fishermen mending their nets, ascend the cliffs to a small place called Trimingham, and purchase our first Norfolk loaf.

By the time we had returned, cooked and partaken of breakfast, and had prayers, it is 9 A.M., the tide has spent its northward force, and is ready to turn and help us to the south. The anchor is weighed, the sails unfurled. It was very slow work at first, but I had got a presentiment in the morning that we would have a fine breeze before the day was old. This presentiment was related more to faith than to sight. Of course I saw nothing physical against it, but it was the pure result of religion, and had nothing to do with any knowledge I possessed from the appearance of the sky or the weight of the atmosphere. Let me not be here misunderstood as having prayed for favourable winds and weather. Let it suffice that I had the summer. "Forwell, you'll stay till next Sabbath and preach for me again," said a minister one Sabbath evening. "That depends

on the wind," was my reply. "Then what wind would keep you here, that I may know what to pray for?" said his reverence. I told him, and doubtless he prayed, for the wind blew in that direction for six days, till he got the sermon. But I always left the wind and weather out of my petitions. True, I might have chosen some text to the effect that God for us would temper the blast, or make smooth our path; but the one which in bold type hung in the most prominent part of our cabin was the following:—"When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee." Enough, enough; then we'll take them as they come.

I cannot explain the presentiment of this morning otherwise than by saying, you have a particular friend from whom you have asked no special favour in a given case, but from your knowledge of his character and doings you have a firm belief as to how he will act towards you in the given circumstances.

And the fine breeze did come. Before we entered Yarmouth Roads we were splitting the water at the rate of 12 miles an hour, for we made the distance between Wintertonness buoy and the elbow buoy at the entrance to the Cockle Gat—a distance of 2 miles—in ten minutes.

Keeping the Cockle lightship on the port, we

count the black buoys on the starboard as we pass them, and now Yarmouth is in view. The tide is running south; there is therefore a strong current across the mouth of the Yare, the wind is with the tide, and, what is more exciting still, although we know we are flying towards the harbour entrance, we don't know exactly where it is. True, we carry chart and sailing directions, which give depth, distance, and so forth, but which not only advise, but suppose the captain, however learned, in approaching a strange harbour to hoist his signal for a pilot. Nay more, should he run the risk without a pilot, however well he may suppose himself acquainted, in case of damage he would lose his insurance. We dash in with one consolation—if we strike a pier our craft is not so heavy as to knock it down; the damage will be confined to the *Silver Cloud*.

But where are the piers? Away in yonder you see rows of tarred logs rising out of the water; but where is the opening? Both piers are probably of the same colour, and from some positions outside they appear in one. On land when the driver has doubt about the road ahead, he draws up his reins and slackens speed. Well, you may shorten sail, but you might as well attempt to bridle time as stop the tide. In fact, the only possibility of entering at all lies in keeping way upon your vessel and plenty of sail, so that when you do discover the opening

you may be able to bear up for it, and not allow the tide all its own way to spin you away past. It is splendid practice. With one glance, at a certain point, at a given moment, you must take in twenty things at once—comprehend the position of the piers, the relative direction of the wind above, the current of the waters below, the ships and steamers before and behind, and the direction in which they are all sailing, and in that instant you must act with sail and helm, all in far less time than it takes to read this, or you are away on the wrong side of the pier on the rocks to wreck among the breakers, or driven past the entrance, and, wind and tide against you, some other port you may enter, but not now the one you had intended.

The piers are distinguished, and we hold the bow in such a way as an amateur would suppose us sailing for the outside of the north pier till within 50 yards of it, then we steer as if to stick the jibboom into the pier till within 20 yards, then it is left say 2 fathoms on the starboard, and away we rush in on a volume of water which is in a tremendous hurry to fill up scores of square miles inland, I suppose as far as Norwich, because it must be back again by a certain time. We protest against being carried with it, however, by connecting ourselves to *terra firma* by means of an anchor before we are a hundred fathoms inside the piers. We are

now, I suppose, in the greatest fishing port in the world.

Here we meet the usual croakers. "You will never go back to Scotland in that?" "I say, this must be for a wager—£2000—eh? I'm blowed if I'd try it for any less." Of course I denied that there was any wager, but that denial seems to have been of no avail. And now, lest the reader should be wearied with the account of how *I* sailed, and what *I* saw, I shall turn the mirror here; and for a change, instead of telling how Great Yarmouth and its people appeared to the crew of the *Silver Cloud*, I shall treat my reader to a view of the ship and the crew as they appeared to the people. On my return I laid hold of an old copy of the *Yarmouth Independence* newspaper, which had noticed us when outward bound, thus:—"On Tuesday last a strange-looking boat, containing two individuals, entered the harbour and moored in the river. Some observation was attracted to the craft in question, and a few curious ones having ventured to inquire as to her destination, it was elicited that she had come from Dundee, and was bound as far as Dunkirk. The size of the boat not being larger than a shrimper, more curiosity was aroused regarding the object of the voyage. But nothing beyond the fact that a wager was depending on her reaching Dunkirk within a certain period of time could be extracted

from the commander of the vessel, and his lieutenant, a juvenile of rather tender years, was equally reticent upon the point. The mysterious boat and its two occupants left the harbour on the following day, and as the captain was seen to unroll a chart of immense proportions and become deeply immersed in the study thereof, it is presumed that he intended to strike out boldly for his destination."

Wednesday, 7th June.—We have had a good sleep, read a Dundee love-letter, written a long one in return, written the log, and by 11 A.M. are half-dressed to go up and see this splendid town, when it suddenly appeared to us that the wind was fair, the tide also in our favour, and the like might not occur for weeks again. Off went the "blacks," aside went the chimney-hat, some provisions were hurried in, the letter was posted in the nearest box, and in a few minutes we are making fast along Yarmouth Bay.

Doubtless, "the captain was seen to unroll a chart of immense proportions, and become deeply immersed in the study thereof" till he made sure of where he was going and how to go to it. There was little time for this before he started. The beauty of the sky to-day, the aspect of the sea, the fair whitening sandy beach, Lowestoft Cliffs, Pakefield, Kessingland, Southwold, Aldborough, all in holiday attire, with their magnificent summer houses sparkling in lovely

order along the summits of the cliffs, baffle the power of pen or tongue.

Orfordness is the point where a coasting vessel, taking the shortest way, would leave the Suffolk shore to strike across for the North Foreland of Kent—distance 45 miles. Orfordhaven, 6 miles beyond the Ness, about 40 from Yarmouth, would be a fair distance since the forenoon, and 120 miles from where we started in this chapter. There we might rest for the night, and after a sleep decide whether we would take this 45-mile course, out of sight of land, or run up the Thames as far as Sheerness, and then sail down the other side. On the chart abreast of Orfordness the words are printed, "Strong ripples." Strong ripples worth noticing to a large ship mean very strong waves to a craft like mine; and, observe, the breeze has freshened and is still from the east. We had towed the dingey through thick and thin since we left Broughty, not yet having attempted to take her on board. The murky prophets as we went along often told that we would have to cut her adrift some day for the safety and working of the other: in which doleful prediction they were for the three hundred and fiftieth time wrong. But here the poor dingey, after the maddest jumping and dancing, sailing sideways and backwards and forwards, writhing and twisting, alternately threatening to break her nose on the

stern of her big unsympathetic sister, and threatening to break the rope that bound them together, had all this furious fun taken out of her at once by being half-filled with one of these "ripples." We got into smoother water ahead, where we baled the small boat, and reached the haven by 9 P.M.—too late. The tide was too far ebbcd. I thought I saw the waves breaking across the mouth of what I supposed the entrance, pushed off the dingey, and with an oar made certain that there was not water to float us safely over the bar.

We gave chain to the anchor, and notwithstanding the rocking, which was a little to the violent side, spread down the blankets, and stretched ourselves in the position we usually assumed when asleep.

CHAPTER XI.

In Company with a Thames Sloop—Navigation among the Shoals—
Thirty Miles in Mist—Our Landfall—Supposed Joking—The
Downs—The Line we drew across the Channels—Historical
Associations—Hurrah for Dover.

The curtain fell in last chapter as we went to bed at anchor on the open sea, with the wind from the east, off Orford Haven, on the Suffolk coast.

I did not sleep soundly, if, indeed, I slept at all. Looked out at 3 A.M. It was gray and misty. Saw a sloop making for the Thames, and resolved, if possible, to take her guidance, for the banks are numberless, and the mist threatened to hide the land as a mark of our progress. So all hands are piped, up goes the anchor, and loose fly the sails. We soon overtook her, and her captain, hearing some one in conversation with his steersman, came on deck; when, in order to have a nice talk with him, I kept a little in the lee of his sails, as the *Silver Cloud* seemed anxious to go forward. By way of awakening him, if that were needed, I told him we were from Scotland, and to elicit information I said we were bound to Sheerness. "Oh, then, you may go on; you can go faster than we. Just keep the land aboard.

Nothing will pick you up. You'll take no 'arm." And away we went, unrolling the chart to see that he was right, and to name the points and places as we passed along.

We are abreast of the Naze, near Harwich, the most eastern point of Essex, when the following query occurred to our captain:—We have a splendid breeze to take us up to Sheerness; but that wind has continued a week, and when may we get a change to take us back down the Kentish shore? Besides, what kind of place may Sheerness be for us—so near London, doubtless with a wild current in the narrow waters, and steamers innumerable? Out came the chart. The straight line from the Naze to the North Foreland is measured—30 miles—and all the difficulties on this line glanced over. All the channels that run into the Thames—the East Swin, the Black Deep, the Prince's, the Queen's, and the South Channel—and all the banks forming these channels must be crossed—the Gunfleet, the Sunk Sand, the Long Sand, respectively 11, 14, and $17\frac{1}{2}$ miles long; and we must also clear the Margate Sand. Besides, there was a fresh easterly wind raising a chopping sea, especially on the shoals, and the mist preventing a view further than 5 miles. But I saw that there were parts of these banks on which there was always some water, and if I could so alter my course (for a straight one would not do) when over the one bank

as to strike the next where there was most water, all would be well, especially as the tide for two hours yet would still rise. So, instead of the stern the beam of the *Silver Cloud* is turned to the breeze, and away we go. Leaving the Wallet, which channel we were running up, we cross the Gunfleet, east of the white tower, and lose sight of land. We now enter the East Swin Channel, and (always allowing two points for the tidal current) change our course further to the right or west of south to strike the next sand (the Sunk) at a place where we might safely cross.

But in the absence of buoys, and therefore without sea-mark or land-mark, how do you know when you approach a bank? Thus: when from the depth and shortness of the wave we suspect a shoal we keep the lead-line going till we find, say 4 fathoms. That is the bank—no steamer would come there—that is 2 fathoms for the water on the bank at this place, and 2 fathoms for the tide here at this time. On we dash till our line of 6 or 7 fathoms again fails to find the bottom; then we are across the bank, when our course is changed again to strike the next bank at the right place, which bank is discovered and crossed in the same way.

The tide is now running to the east, but the wind being from the east, the more we turn the bow to stem the tide the better the sails catch the breeze;

and on we fly for hours, not only without sight of land, with no soundings, but without sight of a vessel—yea, without sight of a solitary fowl. The suspense is not agreeable, and we resolve to take another way returning; besides, the time looks much longer when surrounded only with a circle of mist. The eastern waves again threaten the dingey, striking her till they send her stern forward and her bow turns round to them, when the *Silver Cloud* gives her such a tug, as much as to say, "Come away, lass; never mind them; look at me."

Staring into the mist ahead for hours, above the dim horizon something like a ship, something like land, and all sorts of phantoms and fancies float before the vision; but you wink, and, behold, they are gone. It was an ocular illusion. The sight, I suppose, for want of more solid exercise, was taking a waltz hand in hand with the imagination.

"Bill," said I, "going at such a speed and so long, I doubt we have missed the North Foreland, and are away down the Channel, on to the Atlantic, to meet the two—the man and his wife in the small boat coming from America—who, we suppose, are dafter a good deal than ourselves."

I would fain have taken my longitude and latitude, having on board a first-class sextant; but having no regulated chronometer, if my watch had differed but five minutes from Greenwich that would have

thrown my calculation exactly 75 nautical miles wrong.

The latitude could have been easily taken at noon, but, like Paul, with this easterly wind and mist we had neither sun nor stars.

A letter had come from Dundee saying that eight days of an interval had elapsed between the arrival of letters, and I was to try and avoid that again, because the writer wished always to know where I was. But that was precisely my own difficulty on several occasions such as the present; I did not know where I was myself, and would have given something to know the same. We have made our calculations, however, and sailed accordingly, and meanwhile the *Silver Cloud* is doing her work in great style. And now there is a hurrah on board. Surely our eyes no longer deceive us. Yonder is the sail of a smack, yonder is another, and yonder is a steamer, and, better far, yonder is a buoy, which will tell us the whole story of its surroundings. And for the buoy among the rollers we steer. But what if that buoy mark the shallowest place of some bank, and that bank lie between us and the buoy? Out with the lead-line. All right—put it past. A steamer crosses between us and the buoy.

We could not have made a more splendid landfall. We had struck, as we intended, the north-east point of Kent. The buoy is the second which marks the

margin of the Margate Sands; then we are in the Queen's Channel; that is Margate away in on our starboard, and this headland which looms aloft in the mist is the North Foreland.

When describing the preceding piece of navigation in detail to a Thames skipper in Calais harbour, he said he would not have attempted it for £100, and he had sailed as master out and in the Thames for thirty years. It does not matter though he had sailed as master 300 years; the whole crew of the *Silver Cloud* are witnesses, and ready to give their oath that they carefully sounded when in shallow water, and never had less than three fathoms. And if I have discovered any new passage here it will be of vastly more value than one in the frozen regions, and we may expect the fact to be suitably acknowledged in high quarters as another glory to adorn the already illustrious reign of our sovereign lady the Queen. He said I must have been long the master of a vessel. I answered no; and in order to puzzle him further, I said I was a baker, and had never been in these quarters before. This he took as a joke, adding that no baker could handle the chart in that fashion; "but," said he, "it matters not what you have been; after this you are duly entitled to the designation captain;" appealing to another English captain if I did not know these waters and could handle the chart as well as themselves. On the element where

it is the highest title given we never got anything else; and we wore it all the more readily that it was bestowed by those who were in the best position to judge as to the qualities that entitle you to the name.

But this Calais "crack" is a little in anticipation.

We are rounding the North Foreland when the sun shines through, and Broadstairs, with benignant glance, looks down in all its summer splendour, with its tall shining terraces borne aloft on the white lustrous cliffs. Then Ramsgate, in its richest dress, with its glistening towers, golden pinnacles, and imposing architecture bursts upon our view, so as to make us feel that we are nearing the neighbourhood of royalty.

As we enter the Downs, the eastern wave broken by the Goodwin Sands, the water is comparatively smooth, and since we have not enjoyed cooked food for twenty-four hours the captain orders coffee and eggs.

And now that we have quaffed the warm cup, and the *Silver Cloud* with wind and tide is gliding majestically along towards Dover Cliffs, let us think a minute about where we are.

If you except that strip of land called Palestine, and a line we have yet to draw from Dover to Calais, then I challenge the historian of any land to draw a line of equal length on another part of this great globe which shall equal in interest, or be as

rich in memories of the mighty past, as that line which we drew to-day as we sailed from the Naze of Harwich to the shore of Kent across the channels leading to the Thames.

Think of the millions of noble ships and tens of millions of the human race—armies, navies, emigrants unnumbered that have poured forth across this line to be scattered to the utmost corners of the globe, never to return:—

“ Their graves are severed far and wide,
By mount, and stream, and sea.”

Think of the ships that have come from all quarters of the earth—

“ From Greenland's icy mountains,
From India's coral strand —”

laden with the riches of the Old and New Worlds—their gold, their fruits, their spices, and their human inhabitants. Princes, kings, and emperors, from north, south, east, and west, attended with pomp and splendour, have crossed this line to pay their friendly visits at the seat of England's rule. Some, too, have come to win a crown; others, hurled from the height of majesty, in flight have crossed this line to leave for ever the splendours of a throne. I might revel in royal stories of kings and queens and pompous personages, who, having played their part, passed away from this high platform of the world's

great stage. I shall refrain. I name but one who inward-bound crossed this line we drew. His name was Somerset. He was a negro slave who came in attendace upon his master from Jamaica, and was confined on board a ship in the Thames in order to be carried back. But he had breathed the air of England, he claimed his freedom, was brought up by writ of Habeas Corpus, when Lord Mansfield, in the Court of King's Bench (1772), established the grand doctrine that the air of England is too pure for slavery, and that when the slave sets foot on British soil he is a slave no more.

Yonder, on our starboard bow, between Walmer Castle and Sandwich, is the spot where, in the latter part of 55 B.C., the mighty Roman, Julius Cæsar, is supposed first to have set foot on English soil. The North Foreland, which we have just rounded, is the north-east point of the Isle of Thanet, which is the north-east part of Kent, where landed the Jutes about 449; and Kent became the first possession of the Anglo-Saxons in Britain, and remains the most Anglo-Saxon county in England still.

Here, too, the Danes in 851 tried the experiment for the first time of wintering in the land they annually came to plunder.

And there, on our starboard beam, in Sandwich, where Richard of the lion-heart landed in 1194, after an absence of four and a half years from his throne,

during which time he had prosecuted his perilous and victorious crusade on Canaan's shores, been shipwrecked on the Italian coast, and having escaped the sea, was ignominiously imprisoned within the grim walls of a German castle.

And these are the waters that witnessed Van Tromp sailing with the broom at his masthead, as if to sweep English vessels from the seas, for which audacious act the daring Dutchman paid the penalty, on his native shores, with defeat and his own life's blood, under the avenging fire of the English cannon.

Yes; these are the waters that have been reddened by the blood of the brave. Here Blake fired his first floating gun. Blake, the pious and the learned, the admiral and the Oxford graduate, the ocean Oliver, the intrepid "Puritan sea-king," here contended with his mightiest maritime rival, and first made the nations feel that England had a navy; on these waters he settled her sovereignty over the seas, and established the fact that Britannia rules the wave. And last, though not least, here, a little to the south of Deal, looking down in great dignity on the sea, is Walmer Castle, significantly the latest residence of one who will be as long remembered as Blake. Here the Great Duke lived in retirement, clothed in the glory of the great victories he had won, and in a place from which his eagle eye could sweep across the waters, and frown, if need be, on

his former foes the French. Twenty-five years ago the Duke of Wellington here breathed his last. We have passed Deal, with its pretty houses and its boats hauled upon the beach ready to launch—Deal, glorious for the bravery of its boatmen in rendering assistance to the distressed at sea. And now, having rounded the South Foreland, full in view are the Dover Cliffs, with their faces of shining chalk, but with velvet caps of the loveliest green.

We can scarcely believe we left Yarmouth yesterday at 11 forenoon, and here we are at Dover—over 100 miles—by 3 P.M. next day, all without touching land. Dover, our last English port—hurrah!

CHAPTER XII.

Dover Dock—Advised Again—Course shaped for the Continent—
Sighting France—Entering Calais—Encountering the French—
Trying our French on French ears—Boarded by Officers of
Custom—Per Rail to Paris—Paris.

After tea and telegraphing to Dundee, we enjoy ten hours' unbroken deep sleep in Dover Dock.

Henry VIII. made the first pier at Dover, and ever since Dover—being the "key of the kingdom" and on the highway to the Continent—has played a most important part in the nation's history, especially in relation to France. Charles II., whose father perished by the executioner, and whose grandfather in France fell by an assassin, landed here in May, 1660, on his way to the English throne; so that Dover was the first point of England that physically took part in the Restoration. Here ten years later the same Charles signed the secret and humiliating treaty with Louis XIV., which had for its aim the destruction of the Protestant Dutch Republic, by which act in Dover he sold the liberties of England and the interests of Europe, and at same time sealed the doom of the Stuart dynasty. On the day before he reached London, where he was welcomed by the

populace drinking his health on their knees in the public streets, an infant was born in North Germany who became George I. of England.

What struck us about Dover was its military aspect. With its rock-roofed barracks, its underground magazines, its forts and battlements, all alive with soldiers, earnest, active, and watchful, Dover is doubtless the English "bobby" or sentinel who, well armed and in sight of our lively cousins, gravely keeps watch over the interests of Old England.

A Mr. Scott, a native of Tayport, but whom we had never seen before, showed us no small kindness here.

To the rigging of our ship we now added a mizzen-mast, as we carried with us a mizzen-sail in case of very light winds.

A boatman advised us, if we were going to France, to leave our boat here and take the steamer. Confound the talk—are we not free of that stuff yet? He might as well have addressed the chalk cliffs. "I know 'em hover there," he continued. "A Frenchman wouldn't lift you out of the water to save your life. I'd lift a Frenchman out, but he'd not lift me. That's a Frenchman." I suppose he had come to the conclusion that we would require to be lifted out of the water.

Monday, 25th June.—We left Dover in the forenoon to see how it appeared outside. There was no

wind—we were drifting with the tide; so, rather than be forced homeward thus, we ran under a cliff at the South Foreland, anchored close to shore, and cooked a tea dinner, intending to return to Dover as soon as the tide turned to take us back. Dinner past, a breeze sprang out of the south-west, so we turned the bow towards the Continent. The idea of crossing the English Channel suggested commotion of waters. “Necessity is the mother of invention,” so we haul the small boat on board, laying her across with bottom up, with each end of her projecting $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet over the gunwale of the *Silver Cloud*.

But is it a sou'-wester you have started with? Then experience tells it will not be long till we need not only our sou'-wester hat, but our sou'-wester trousers, to keep us dry while reefing. That's a sou'-wester.

The sooner we are across the better; and so, as long as she will stand it, up goes the new mizzen-mast and sail.

And now, with England behind, the small boat on board, and with her three wings all spread and full—the jib, lug, and mizzen—as she flies over the rising Channel wave I begin to think that both the *Silver Cloud* and her skipper have, after all, what the Scotch call a “good cheek.” Many an undignified thought has been entertained in regard to her; but the thoughts of others affect her not in her noble

career; what a fine lesson she teaches here—on she dashes grandly.

Yonder, on our starboard bow, is Cape Grisnez growing out of the sea; ten miles to left of that lies Calais. The sou'-wester rises, the rollers swell, their crests whiten, the deep yawns between, but every boat's length we know brings us nearer the shelter of the white Cape.

The captain casts his eye to windward, measures the wave, and pronounces the verdict, "The *Silver Cloud* can stand twice that sea." She seems to hear it, and goes away well pleased, ploughing through it in fine style, as much as to say, "See how I can do it in the French waters."

The breeze stiffens, it darkens up to windward, there is too much sail, and down goes the mizzen, and the mizzenmast is put away. Then, as the sail that chiefly buries the bow, down goes the jib. Still the storm rises. Clad in oilskins I go forward several times, and stand with hand on halyards ready to lower and reef the lug, but reluctant, knowing that I have a strong tide in the opposite direction to the wind; and therefore, a good force being needed to compensate for the tide, the lug was never reefed.

Some monster waves came rolling round the Cape, reminding us of stories we had heard of Channel storms, but these we soon leave behind.

We are abreast of Calais piers by 6.30; we left

Dover Cliffs at 2 o'clock—time $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours—thus beating by more than one-half the mighty Roman, Julius Cæsar, for he took 10 hours the first time he crossed from France to England.

Here we drop anchor till the tide rises, make tea, and drink it with grateful hearts, as our eyes wander along the lovely shore of France. By 7.30, with reefed jib and two reefs in the lug-sail, we bear away in between the long piers, singing out to every human being within reach, *Parlez-vous Anglais?* that is, Can you speak English? The invariable reply was a shrug of the shoulders and an emphatic *Non*. Well, if they cannot speak English I must try French, and so I stammer out, *Où est une bonne place pour mon bateau?*—Where is a good place for my boat? To which I get a voluminous answer with such rapidity that I cannot catch a word, but accompanied with as much gesticulation as was quite sufficient without any articulation at all.

Pausing for a survey, we lay hold on a French fishing vessel, and are instantly surrounded by a dozen men and boys, to whom I put my old question in their own language, *Parlez-vous Anglais?* but not one of them had a syllable. After gaping at us one of the boys addressed me as John, or rather “Yeon,” whereupon my little fellow remarked, “We are foreigners here.” No mistake about that, we are foreigners. Now every syllable of French I could

muster was most precious. Gentlemen tell us about going to France and doing tolerably well without the language; but they take ticket in London, are accompanied by Franco-Anglicans all the way, and drop into a Paris hotel where some Frenchman who has acquired English is on tiptoe to show off before his unlettered fellow-servants or master how he can converse with *de Anglees man* in *de foreign tongue*, and refuses to hear your attempts at French. But those with whom we were now surrounded had no more English than our fishermen have of French—that is, not one syllable.

The shortest and simplest way of acquiring the power of letting yourself be understood is to get on memory a number of useful nouns, and do the verbs with your arms, which latter mode of speech is perfectly French. With a sufficient number of French nouns, a sufficient number of English sovereigns (gold), and a pair of flexible arms that know something about significant gesticulation, you may travel the length and breadth of France at ease till you become more accomplished.

My French was meagre, and what I had was learned from books, with the exception of a single lesson long ago on the pronunciation. Are some of my readers young ladies or young gentlemen who for some time have been learning French, but who occasionally are disquieted by hearing it remarked

that the French you learn will be of no account when you go to France? Then, for your consolation, allow me to give the statement the most unqualified contradiction.

In England we had to repeat our English to a provoking degree. We could not handle the h, or rather we did not wish to do it, according to their taste. We were shocked, for example, to hear, even in an English pulpit, the sacred volume quoted thus: "Ee that 'ath hears to 'ear, let 'eem 'ear." But in France we were all aglow to fall in with the local requirements. Never, the whole time I was in France, did I require to pronounce a French word twice that Monsieur might understand it. Your beauties of pronunciation and niceties of coupling like genders are of no more use in letting yourself be understood, which is the primary end of language, than the pretty artificial flower displayed on your head-dress is of use to keep you warm, which is the primary end of dress. Don't let it be understood, however, that I despise, where they can be attained, flowers and the finest taste, either in the dress of thought or in the garments that clothe the human form.

Of course I had the Latin language, which is of vast service in enabling one to remember French. Take, for example, the first thing we had to look for in Calais after leaving our boat to take rail for Paris. Over a gate was written, *Chemin de fer du Nord*.

When once told, your English will keep you in remembrance that *nord* is north. Then *fer* is Latin for iron, and *de* is Latin for of. We have only to inquire as to the meaning of one word—namely, *chemin*, which we are told, means path. We now translate, *Path of iron of the north*, or more Anglais, —the Northern Railway.

Two men with blue frocks came on board with a quantity of gibberish about *une papier*—that is, a paper—in other words, asking a sight of our passport. It took them, of course, a tremendous time to get us to understand what they meant, seeing we had no such thing. No vessel can pass out of a French port without a passport. For this and harbour dues we paid 10s., illustrating what a friend told us before leaving England—"They'll make you shovel out over there." No English port charged a farthing. However, look at the passport—the thing for which we paid. It is both bigger and bonnier than a ten pound note. It gives various particulars of a vessel from Dundee, by name *Silver Cloud*; and literally rendering the French, right in the centre of the paper, partly written, partly printed, I read my designation thus—"lord Forwell, captain." If this, in addition to being entered in the French books in the same style, is not worth 10s., I leave my readers to judge.

During the time these clearance papers are being

prepared I elicit such information from Monsieur as the following: "We are none the worse of the late war now, except in the locality of action. We have now more money than we had as a nation before the war began. And perhaps in five years the glory taken from us by the Prussians will be sharply looked after."

Our boat is drawn into the quietest corner of Calais dock, a Frenchman who speaks English is promised so many francs to cast an eye on her till I return, and by 10.10 A.M. on the day after our arrival we are off per rail to Paris, breaking the journey for two hours at Boulogne. Arriving at *la grande* city late in the evening, unheralded and without luggage, we have to call at the third hotel—Hotel de Gibraltar—St. Honore—before we get admittance.

Of course we walked up and down the principal Boulevards, the Garden of the Tuileries, the Place de la Concorde, Champs-Elysees, &c.; visited such places as the Louvre, &c.; but this is neither time nor place for a guide-book. That will be sufficiently soon when the reader arrives at the Paris end of the *Chemin de fer du Nord*. What he wants is a momentary view of Paris such as he might get of Dundee from the Law, or of Edinburgh from the castle. Well, the weather is glorious; there is no smoke in Paris; and standing on the summit of the Triumphal Arch I scribble the following with a

pencil on a scrap of paper, which I present to the reader without alteration: Paris seems one grand garden, well watered, beautifully laid out, and ornamented with great taste—all the available elements of nature combined, artistically finished, and placed among the green trees, which look all the more beautiful being planted on a soil which, partaking largely of the chalk strata, is naturally white. What the green covering does for the crowns of the white Dover Cliffs, the verdant trees do for the lustrous architecture of Paris. The strips of green running away in straight lines along the rows of white ornamented architecture, with here and there some bristling brilliant ornament rising above the rest, glistening in the sun, give the view a grandeur and artistic effect most dazzling to behold.

CHAPTER XIII.

The French ladies—"Prigging"—Versailles—A Bedroom for the Queen of England—Palaces of Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon—Externally Pretty—Back to Calais.

"What about the French ladies?" is a question that has been repeatedly put to me by my Dundee female friends—"what about the French ladies?" What does the question mean? Were they just such sweet creatures as one could easily fall in love with? and did you discover wherein lay the attractive charm?—Is that it?

There are three beauties which belong to the ladies in general. (1) What I shall call the garment beauty, which may be imparted to the dame by the dress-maker and the lady's maid, yet what is often meant in Scotch when it is said, "She was braw." (2) There is the physical beauty, which the poets have painted, with the long eyelashes, the kindling glance, &c., setting forth its magic charms by the fairest metaphors from the floral world; and for specimens of which I refer the reader, though he be nothing whatever of a poet, to certain pictures in his memory which are unapproachable by either pen or poet's tongue. (3) But we are accustomed to look through

both these beauties, through the clothing, through the skin and mould, however graceful, into the mental and spiritual beauty—the adornments of courtesy and kindness, the beauty which Sir Walter had in his mind when he penned the lines:—

“When pain and anguish wring the brow,
A ministering *angel* thou.”

This is the kind of beauty that becomes exceedingly attractive to us older boys. Yet what a relation exists between these beauties! The clothing displays the taste and tendency of the mind; and the frown of a dandy—the indication of a ruffled spirit—has the same effect upon her physical beauty as a black cloud on the face of heaven would have upon a garden of golden lilies. It would, I fear, be difficult to decide in what proportions these beauties mingle when most successful in rousing that most terrible, most tyrannical, most enslaving, and sometimes most lamentable of all the passions, namely, love.

But a fellow with a pet pleasure boat at his command, and under his charge, is not the man to carry away in his mind likenesses of the ladies of the ports and towns which he has touched. When purchasing my first yacht at Leith, on inquiring, as acute purchasers will, why the young gentleman was parting with her, he frankly, aside, gave me the reason—he was going to—get married. The logical conclusion,

which is quite in harmony with the experimental, is that having a wife is incompatible with having a yacht to attend to at the same time. The one is a competitor against the other for your attention. "The ocean's my home" just as "my barque is my bride." Hence, unless they themselves have a wild love for the ocean, the open hostility shown by the ladies to their husbands' pleasure sea-going craft.

According to the above-stated principle, if a French beauty flitted across my ocular vision, or stood before me, her image for the moment might be formed on the retina of the eye, but before it had time to leave any lasting impression, behold, uppermost of all earthly things, on the inner mental vision sat the *Silver Cloud*, the more so that now she was left alone and subject to all the dangers of a foreign port.

She, then, is to blame, if blame there is to be, for my stupidity, my inability to go deeper in answer to the query of my fair friends of the North.

Hurried and absent-minded as was my inland visit, however, I shall cite a higher authority even than Sir Walter in praise of the queenly daughters of France. It may be emphatically said of the French ladies, as well as the French gentlemen, that they "are not forgetful to entertain strangers." The lady who in the *Rue de Rivoli*, when the Paris pavements became too hot for boots, fitted on a pair of slippers for me so nicely; the two *dames* who prepared and

served up dinner for us in the restaurant at Versailles; the *femme de charge* who so courteously supplied us with the *pommes de terre*, cooked so deliciously in the French style; and the Calais lady who, in her own shop, with foot and finger, assisted me to select a pair of shoes, whose quality, size, and finish would please as a present for "the girl I left behind me," were all embodiments of glowing gratitude, which made every inch in their graceful bodies agile, and glanced from their countenances in the happy enjoyment of our presence.

Nor when the French are presenting to you their suavity and fine manners, are they doing so on the ground that they hold these cheap themselves. In Calais dock, when shifting my vessel, the dredger's rope stretched across the harbour, obstructing the way; and not wishing to lower my mast, the Frenchman, or Anglo-Frenchman, who was assisting me, fired all manner of arguments at the dredger to let go his rope. Doubtless he cursed the rope, cursed the dredger, and cursed every man on board. I could interpret none of it except the *tone*, which was unmistakably peremptory, if not imprecatory. It was loud enough, but fell short of the mark: the rope remained—the dredger was deaf. As a kind of forlorn hope I tried my hand, or rather my mouth. *S'il vous plait, Monsieur*—"If you please, sir," I shouted. Scarcely had the sounds time to reach the dredger

when into the water sank the rope—the way was clear. *Sil vous plait* was irresistible.

To one thing among the habits of the French I must take exception. In Scotland the person who tries to reduce the price of an article before purchasing it is said to "prig it down." In France I did not like the extent to which this is practised amongst the most respectable shops, and by the most respectable customers. The most we did was to ask the price before we purchased; we never prigged. By and by I discovered that the French turn of mind was to look more at the money than at the goods; and so when we wished, for example, to "go in for" strawberries, instead of asking how much for such and such a quantity, I laid down say half a franc (5*d.*) and asked strawberries for that; whereupon the Frenchman, having fixed in his mind all the money he was to get out of me for the time being, lifted a paper bag and continued to fill it till I was concluding that he had surely made a mistake. They were very good, and purchased thus they were very cheap.

"Have you been to Versailles?" said an English lady at the breakfast-table in our Paris hotel. "No," I replied. "Then spend a day more and go." "Go," echoed her husband. "How would you describe it?" I asked. "Indescribable," was the answer.

So say I. If ever you are at Paris, go.

But some of my readers may never be there (unless I lend them the *Silver Cloud*), so I must attempt, at least with my pen, to take you round the first corner.

Versailles is ten miles from Paris. We arrive about 10 A.M. at the front gates to the palaces, and to save time and miss nothing we procure at once a guide who can talk either French or English for five or six francs.

Here riches and art have conspired to present splendours upon splendours. Amongst the artificial lakes, fountains, and flowery lawns we are first ushered into the apartment where sit the seven carriages of state, each, down to the very shods of the wheels, presenting a mass of ornamented burnished gold. By far the grandest of these—the most magnificent carriage in the world—was used at the coronation of Charles X. The others belonged to the Napoleons, and were paraded on such occasions as the first and second marriages of Napoleon I. The last time they were used was on the occasion of the fiery baptism of the present Prince Imperial. .

We now enter the Grand Trianon, the palace built by Louis XIV. for one of his mistresses, Madame de Maintenon. But it would require far too much space in this log-book to touch upon the successive splendours of these palatial apartments. Among them we are shown a bedroom which was prepared

for Queen Victoria when she visited France in 1855. Pretty is the word to describe anything French. Everything in France is pretty, from the living splendours that surround the throne down, down to the ornamented wooden slab that marks the last resting-place of her humblest swain. Their very graveyards are exceedingly pretty. And perhaps the best way of conveying an idea of the wealth displayed, the riches, the beauty and magnificence of this sleeping chamber is just to say that it is the room prepared by the French under direction of the Emperor for the Queen of England. But Victoria did not sleep there.

Now we leave the palace of Madame de Maintenon, and half a mile distant, after being shown the chambers where the French Senate holds its debates, we enter the palace which Louis XIV., the grandest of the French monarchs, built for himself. This castle outrivals anything I have seen—marble, marble, carving, engraving, gold, precious stones, statues, paintings, from floor to glittering ceiling, by the most celebrated of the French genius, portraying her victories of greatest military renown. Here, too, we enter the long rich glittering hall in which on that sumptuous evening the Emperor of the French led the dance with the Queen of England on his arm. Poor Louis! with Sedan before him, and King William to take up head-quarters and be proclaimed in the

midst of his victorious generals in the very palace where Louis had this high dance—the place where now we stand. But what are these magnificent edifices, with their sublime architecture in marble and glittering gold and gorgeous furniture? Whence their origin? and whence their emptiness?—for observe they are empty. No princess there retires to rest; these oaken polished floors resound not to the romp of royal children; no queen now calls these royal halls her home; magnificent as are the walls, no monarch now holds here his court. They are a monument in a high place blazing in the eyes of the world, visited from every corner of the globe. Here meet wondering visitors attracted from India, Africa, North and South America, as well as from the British Isles. (We collided with a party of Americans, and to avoid the two guides' voices going at once their guide did the speaking.)

And to what are they a monument? Ah! even the French guide makes no secret of the reason—whether you be from India or from England—why that pair of splendid palaces have been abandoned by the royal successors of Louis XIV.:—

“The evil men do lives after them,
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

The French custom-house master had told me before the face of the French watchman I had secured

at Calais that he would not trust the watchman, so that as I walk amid the grandeur of the French capital, and revel in gorgeous sights of the palaces of Versailles, my mind is haunted with the possibility that my ship may be dismantled, my return home by sea rendered impossible, or at least that it may fare ill with the *Silver Cloud* before I see her again. This thought coming up cast a rust over the splendours spread before our gaze, and on leaving Versailles and arriving at Paris in the evening, instead of retiring to the Hotel de Gibraltar, we enter the *Bureau de Chemin de fer du Nord*. Nightly transit was nothing new to us; it was summer; both of us could sleep without striking rocks or sinking; the engineer would keep up the wind; and the guard was thoroughly acquainted with the course to manage the helm—away we go for Calais.

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CHAPTER XIV.

Our Ship Sunk—Drowned in the Cabin—The Sunny Side of the Sinking—Sabbath in France—The Fourth and the Eighth Commandments—Historic.

Well it was that we did not come by day expecting to sleep on board on the following night. For some purpose they had allowed the water to leave the dock the first night after I left Calais for Paris, and, sitting on a steep slope at the end of the dock, with stern downward and open, when the tide rose my ship filled, and our sea home was completely submerged under muddy salt water.

All the contents were destroyed—provisions, including biscuits baked in Dundee specially for the cruise, butter, tea, sugar, and even pepper and salt; clothes, consisting of shirts, coats, a black surtout; blankets, cushions; nautical books, charts to the value of 30s.; a fine Bagster Bible, with binding softened and sundered; sermons in print and MS.—my best so far as I could ever learn, and, whatever they might be, I never had heard them described as dry, else I had not grudged them this dip—log-book, note-books, sextant and cuisine, all soaked in the harbour brine.

The only thing, however, which was entirely destroyed was the aneroid barometer—a splendid thing which I had purchased from Mr. Feathers, Dundee. When I showed it to the Calais instrument vendor he said it was now not worth “a bob.” It was very bad—“very sick,” he said, but he would do his best. When I next saw it I pronounced it now dead. The operation had been fatal; it never gave another kick; but the doctor laid his expenses all the same at two francs. A barometer being one of our feelers of safety, I would not sail without it, and had to purchase a new one from the above gentleman, which at first I was inclined to think mad, but we got acquainted. And is not the analogy between the old aneroid and a human being, suggested by the Frenchman’s English, striking, especially in this instance? Was it not a true friend of ours that sailed with us and talked to us, in one respect with a nicety of intelligence far surpassing in penetration the human brain? It spoke of the immediate future, and in its prophetic warnings was never wrong. And did it not meet its death by drowning? What! By the sinking of the *Silver Cloud*? Oh, carry no vague rumours, ye winds. Tell it not on the Bonnetill, whisper it not in the streets of Dundee that life has been lost by drowning on board the *Silver Cloud*. Let the mourning be confined to the remainder of the crew. So long and so

intimately acquainted had we been that I clung to its dead form, and would not inter it in a foreign land. We hung it beside its dancing talkative French successor, and as it hung there, with its dim dead face and motionless hands, its look cast such a melancholy into the atmosphere of our cabin, that I was forced to cover carefully its familiar form with a paper shroud. The doctor stoutly denied that it was dead. Well, if it be but asleep, I can only add that all the storms that have occurred since have failed to wake it up.

As I was emptying my cabin of its soaking contents, some one suggested that "things might have been worse." Exactly so; I caught the idea at once—it was no stranger to me—I had imagined it worse. That idea formed the handiest exit from my calamity. The lug-sail might have been stolen, and it might have been raining, as it was in Scotland. But no, it was a glorious day of sunshine; the wind was adverse for sailing, I got reconciled to my lot, spread out my books, charts, and blankets to dry, and towards the evening of that very day I had caught the sunny side of my misfortune, for I find myself writing in the following strain: "The sun is shining, the sky is clear, Calais, with its bright sands is gilded with gold, the sails of the *Silver Cloud* are hoisted to dry, dangling in the golden evening beams, and the blankets, though wet in the morning when we arrived

from Paris, we shall sleep in our own hotel afloat to-night." The reader will perhaps say—Where were your lead-sealed biscuit tins and air tanks? Answer—the stem was never completely submerged. The use of the air tanks is to float her though full of water—to drown even you if you were locked in the cabin like the aneroid. If her deck kept above water when she was full, her floating power was perfect. But we thought it safer under sail to carry 5 cwt. ballast more than she had got air tanks to float.

On Sabbath morning we are early wakened by the yelling of fishermen arriving in boats all the same as on another day, so I walk up to see a French town on the Sabbath. The first thing, as I jump ashore, that meets my eye is an old fat Frenchwoman, barefooted, running along with a net over her shoulder to fish in the river. Railway porters are removing luggage in great heaps as we pass the station. All kinds of shops are open—butchers, bakers, iron-mongers, earthenware, green market, all alive—for all of which the material is arriving per rail; and even sailors who have been wind-bound for days find Sunday the only suitable day for tarring their vessels. The poor men I saw all week hauling at the dredger's punts are weariedly slaving away, not at the dredging of the harbour, for there seems to be a little difference here and there, but at the repairing of the dredging apparatus. Is this, I ask, what any Scotch-

man would like to see in Scotland? I am not preaching. I am not at present advocating the religion of Jesus Christ in the view of a future world. What we surely all wish is a day of rest in seven, and some honesty and trustworthiness in the men we deal with; and if you cannot show me these on the face of this broad earth without a regard to the precepts of the Bible, then I am bound to advocate the desirableness of that regard, even though I did not believe the Bible to be what Christians suppose it to be at all.

Just as we go south and the Sabbath disappears—just as reverence for and trust in the Creator diminishes—then in the same proportion, besides the physical disadvantages, there vanishes trust in man the creature. “Thou shalt not steal” is thrown overboard with “Thou shalt remember the Sabbath.” The cautioning I got by the English against leaving my boat at Calais, the anxiety expressed by a French ship-broker for the safety of the *Silver Cloud* in my absence, the hint by the custom-house master to unbend my sails and lock them past, even though I had to pay for a watch, would all be out of place in any harbour of good old Scotland.

Calais, with its Pharos or watch-tower, rising high from among the tile roofs like a lighthouse, and the high barricade and deep ditch with which the town is completely inclosed—no entrance from any side

being possible except by arched way or port, with gates as at the entrance to Edinburgh Castle—sends the mind back to scenes of which Calais and the adjoining coast were the theatre.

Edward III., whose grandfather Longshanks put Wallace to a barbarous death, and whose father fled from Bannockburn, after the victory of Crecy—where fell the flower of the French nobility—appeared before the walls of Calais.

The inhabitants underwent a blockade and the horrors of famine, held out against the English for nearly a year, and, after eating horses, dogs, and all other animals within reach, capitulated August 4, 1347. The town, with a strip of neighbouring country, became an integral part of the English dominions, and remained so for upwards of 200 years, sending members to the English Houses of Parliament as late as the reign of Henry VIII. Here arrived in 1415, on his way to England, Henry V., after the gory victory of Agincourt. He was the last kingly warrior of that long epoch dating from the first quarrels of mankind in which success in battle depended chiefly on personal prowess. Since his day, on account of the introduction of artillery, the skill of the leader is more to be depended on than the personal prowess of the combatants. Hither from England, too, came Henry VII.—the money-loving king—with a great army in 1492, when the French king, knowing his

weak point, promised him £149,000 to return and let him alone.

And into the harbour where now we sit and write came Henry VIII., 357 years ago, to meet as friend the King of France; and such was the magnificence and splendour displayed by the two monarchs, that the place where they met—so near us that we might walk to it yet ere we dine—has been called “The Field of the Cloth of Gold.”

Whether it was at this splendid meeting it originated, or was only strengthened, a peculiar regard was seated in the bosom of Francis towards the English monarch; and one fact in their subsequent history illustrates in the most striking manner the power of the imagination over the conditions that make life possible. A notion took possession of Francis that the year that proved fatal to Henry would also be his last. Henry died in 1547; Francis received the news as a sentence passed on himself. “In vain,” says the historian, “he travelled from one country seat to another to remove the impression; slow fever ensued; and he was a corpse in the castle of Rambouillet in little more than two months after death had invaded the palace of Westminster.” Just be earnest enough in making up your mind as to when you will die, then verily you will be a dead man. With these two monarchs died the spirit that permitted English possession of French soil; and the

Duke of Guise took Calais from the English in 1558, during the reign of the first and worst queen-regnant of England, Mary, the cruel daughter of Henry VIII.

The news that Calais was lost to the English flung the already wasted frame of the queen into a fatal fever. She declared she would die, and if her breast were opened Calais would be found written on her heart.

But we wait the wind; the sea lies between us and old England; and as we look we cannot help listening to the story of the deep that divides us from our island home.

Here, a little to the left of us, Cæsar, in 55 B.C., mustering his forces, started at midnight, and, for the first time, reached England by ten next day. Here crossed Claudius, arriving from the Eternal City, in A.D. 43, to be present at the seat of war, recrossing from Britain again in sixteen days.

Here crossed Hadrian in 121 to build the wall between Solway Firth and the mouth of the Tyne; Severus crossed in 211, and honoured England as the receptacle of a Roman emperor's bones. We wait, but kings have waited longer; the winds and waves regard not human pomp. Here Henry II., Plantagenet, on his way to be crowned in England (1154), was detained six weeks by a storm.

From this harbour, too, like a tender flower before it had been subjected to the fatal northern blast,

sailed the young accomplished beauty, the Queen of Scots to be, whom the stroke of death had bereft of her royal husband and the brilliancy of the French throne. Over the same watery path that lies before the *Silver Cloud* sailed Mary to receive the Scottish crown, reaching Leith in August, 1561. And away to the left here on the western horizon, in 1588, during Elizabeth's reign, the Spanish Armada hove in view—a string of monstrous ships occupying seven miles of sea. Here they paused, here they tried their prowess, and here they passed to vanish in the north—vanquished by the storm.

CHAPTER XV.

Pressed to accept a Tow—Acting against our own Judgment—
France, Farewell—Caught by a Channel Squall—How we did
in a “Breeze of Wind”—Touching England Again—Margate.

If the Frenchmen in Calais talked much about the foolhardiness of our voyage, there was one thing that conduced much to our comfort—that was that we did not understand them. One boatman, however, who had determined to put it in English, declared that our vessel was “plenty small.”

Here we had made the acquaintance of the captain of an English schooner, bound to London, with bottles; and nothing would please him but he would tow me across the Channel when the time came to start—that is, when the wind changed. Well, since we had sailed unassisted every inch of the way going, I did not see why I should be over scrupulous as to how I returned. Still I had my doubts about the towing. (1) Would it be as safe for the *Silver Cloud*? Certainly not. (2) Would it be as speedy? Could the schooner go as fast as we, and especially with us in tow? (3) Suppose it came to blow, and the towage annoyed or endangered our English friend, would he not cut our ship adrift in the Ger-

man Ocean? I resolved to start with him—that was all, but it was too much; I would never resolve as much again. Tired of Calais, he determined to go, whatever the direction of the wind, if he could get out; but could not clear the piers without assistance, which meant expenses, the wind being from nor'-west. I could have gone at any time. A large screw was to sail at one o'clock morning, July 3d, and was willing, gratis, to tow my schooner friend into the offing. It was entirely opposed to my judgment to start at this time, for the tide would run for six hours to the east, and the wind was in the same direction as the tide, so that unless with a change of wind we could expect nothing but to drift for six hours into the North Sea, losing sight of France, while it was questionable whether we were nearing the shores of England. The right time to have started was at 5 A.M., when the tide had only two hours to run to the east, and by the time it had turned and run as long in the opposite direction, if you had anything like a side breeze at all, you would have fallen in with the South Foreland, whence you could, in smooth water, skim along the eastern coast of Kent. But who could resist the charm of a tow, no care, and plenty of company as far as you choose to go up the Thames?

The large steamer came down the long harbour, with the red flame floating out of her funnel, in the

gray post-midnight atmosphere, blowing her whistle to warn the schooner to be in readiness. Our friend looked over the stern of his vessel, with the words in a suppressed voice little above a whisper, for we lay close behind—"Silver Cloud, ahoy! are you awake?" "All awake," was the reply. "Are you going?" "Yes; give us your rope." He attaches himself to the steamer, I attach myself to him, and now farewell to France. The steamer had scarcely let him go in the offing, when he shouts out, "Are you not going to try a bit of sail?" "Fast preparing," I answered, at same time remarking to my mate, "Is this the tow we were to get?" Up went lug-sail and jib, and, in order to show him that though I had his rope I was not hindering him, I sailed up to windward of his vessel. He advised me to let go and sail away across myself, and I did so. From our last look of France we knew we were drifting eastward; England lay on our port bow; but hours of sailing were before us—and very fine sailing, too, in the early part of the day—ere we would sight the headlands that have been eagerly looked for by many millions of ships.

We sailed out of sight of land about nine hours. At noon I sighted what I supposed to be the North Foreland, 9 or 10 miles distant to windward, on my port beam. Many a time you think you have sighted a lighthouse, when it is only a sunbeam,

through an opening in a cloud, striking the sail of a vessel, when the hull is out of view. A little attention, and you see your lighthouse moving away. This was, however, the North Foreland, but so far to nor'-east were we that we never saw the light-ships of the Goodwin Sands. Our schooner was now about 2 miles to leeward, and as far behind. Now veered the wind to sou'-west. What! Are we caught by a sou'-wester in the English Channel, 10 miles from land? The change saved further tacking. Rain threatened; that ominous bluish-blackness gathered on the waters to windward, and we were actually caught in a Channel squall. First the dingey, which we had on deck, bottom up, was nearly knocked over the lee gunwale. We fixed her on with ropes. Then the block by which the jib-stay is fixed to the masthead was riven away, and down came the jib. It is stowed past. We had sufficient sail without it, although not so well balanced without any on the jib-boom. Then the wind shook the iron hook out of one of the rings that reef the lug, and tore the sail. Further, the iron holding for the lug-sheet was torn from the gunwale of our ship on the lee or starboard side. These are the things the breeze did, which will prove that it was no ordinary breeze. Now for the answer to the question so often and sometimes so vauntingly put to our skipper, "What would you do in a breeze of wind?" When

anything broke we submissively, and as firmly as possible, tried to mend it or find a substitute. We had a few tools, and in turn acted as sailors, sail-makers, sail-menders, ship-riggers, carpenters, blacksmiths, rope-spinners, or whatever the wind pointed out as the right thing in the right place, and at the right time. And now, with a stiff breeze from south-west, the dingey lashed on board, with most of her weight to windward, the jib down, the mizzen and mizzenmast out of the way, and with two reefs in the lug, we held the bow for the North Foreland, and plunged and crashed through the curly-crested monsters that dared to rear themselves in the road, showing my schooner friend the way to navigate for the Thames. But meanwhile he is making fast upon me, because in the storm it was not necessary for him to reef in the same proportion for the safety of his vessel, and by the time I have entered smooth water, in the lee of the Foreland, I allow him, along with three or four large ships bound to the Thames, to pass across my bow, when he hails me with the words, "How did you get on?" "Rightly," was the reply. He said he was for the Prince's Channel. I told him I preferred the South Channel, as the one nearest land. Here, in the lee of the Foreland, the wind seemed to die, so we contrived to reeve the jib-stay through a hole in the masthead without lowering the mast, even among the rollers, and set the jib and all the lug-sail.

Suddenly again it became black and boisterous, and during the time we are reefing the lug the wind shook the sheets off the jib into the water. I reefed the jib, tied on the sheets with strong twine, and with two reefs in the lug bore up against wind and wave, which were dead ahead, and with three or four "boards" dashed into the harbour of Margate by three in the afternoon. We were only 40 miles on our way home, to sail which it had taken fourteen hours. We could have done the same distance, and far more safely, in six hours less by starting from Calais four hours later, and therefore with four hours more sleep in the morning.

Lesson.—Never count anything on the time of sailing or the company of a larger vessel than your own if you have studied the course, currents, distance, &c., for yourself.

Margate by this time—Wednesday, 4th July—was full of visitors to the coast, all as busy as bees seeking honey in their manifold seaside amusements. Here we heard the British tongue again, felt we should be at home now, and no longer looked upon as foreigners. But hush. Being awake and working since midnight, and occasionally having our nerves as well as our muscles strained, we thought it would be a nice variation to have a substantial tea ashore, and save ourselves the trouble of cooking. In order to this it did not occur to us (we were too

tired to do it) to go through, in the very limited space of our cabin, the labour of changing our dress for the occasion; so, weary and worn, and just as we had been doing work among sails, ropes, salt water, fresh water, and the storm, we emerged from the *Silver Cloud* among the butterflies that had come down to spread their wings on this lovely spot on the English shore. "Dinners, Teas, Breakfasts" were advertised at door and window; so we enter No. 1, with the words, "Can we have a cup of tea?" The old lady looked at us, and answered very saucily, "We don't make cups of tea." She meant that they did not make tea at so much a cup, and had concluded that I would not or could not pay for a tea at which the teapot is set down to your pleasure. I apprehended the situation at once—we were not dressed to be seen in the same room with gentlemen—and answered, defending my homely phraseology, "If you make tea you will drink it out of cups, but, cups or jugs, it is all the same to us." She told us we would get it round the corner, so we had to make our exit with as much grace as possible.

No. 2 served us after the same manner. He said, "Tea was a shilling." "Well," I replied, "suppose it was a sovereign!" I felt my Scotch pride rising, mixed with something else that shall be nameless. Was the reader ever angry and hungry at the same time, with money in his pocket, plenty of viands in

view—the sight of which made his mouth water, and the savoury smell pierced his breast like a knife!

We knew we had other clothing on board, and my finger-points told me that in the pocket of my canvas trousers—canvas though they were—there were still some small pieces of gold. It mattered not—further we had to go. No. 3 was glad to see us. There we had a sumptuous tea, with boiled English ham. In talking with our host afterwards and telling him how we had been treated, he said he took us at once as having come from a ship, and added, “W’y soom of these apprentice clerks as cooms down ’ere of a Saturday afternoon, and all they ’ave in the world is on their back! I knows better.” He said he would be glad to serve us, adding that he had beds, and gave us cards to show others the way to him; but we preferred the bed in our own home, and were soon asleep in the *Silver Cloud* among the fishing vessels in the soft safe harbour of Margate.

But in reflecting on the above treatment one is inclined to ask what these inland dandies want with the sea, if being *directly from the sea* unfitted the captain and owner of the *Silver Cloud*, *alias* William Forwell, Wholesale Biscuit Manufacturer, Dundee, *alias* “lord Forwell,” *alias* the Rev. William Forwell, for being seen beside them, or even under the same roof?

I fear the habits and notions of the visitors here

are unchanged since the time of the author of the *Essays of Elia*. Speaking of this very Margate he says, "They come here to *say* they have been here, with no more relish of the sea than a pond-perch. . . . They come because it is the fashion, and to spoil the nature of the place." (See *The Old Margate Hoy*.)

At Margate, however, through time, we found some men of the highest type of humanity, the worthy successors of the stalwart Christians who lived here in the earlier centuries.

CHAPTER XVI.

Breaking our own Rules—Caught in a Storm—The *Silver Cloud* Decked—To Harwich for Letters—Repassing Orfordness—Deceived by the Chart—The *Silver Cloud* Proved—Sailing Suited for a Bachelor—Sunset on Yarmouth Sands—All Hands Below.

On Friday, 6th July, with wind from west-nor'-west, we resolved to break a rule we had made by deciding to try and reach the Isle of Sheppey or Sheerness, starting against a head wind. We left Margate Roads by 1 P.M. to beat up the Gore or South Channel. For several hours all went well; buoy after buoy was sighted, pointed out on the chart, and left on the proper side, till we were past Reculvers, and nearly opposite Herne Bay, when lo! the horizon suddenly blackened, a dark curtain fell from the heavens upon Herne and hid it from our view. The inky elements assumed a tinge of pink; and now gleamed the lightning close to our ship; the thunder rattled from the clouds, peal after peal resounding on the dark responsive deep. I caught my spirit saying, "Jehovah is on the waters." Doubtless the elements were all here in their sublime grandeur which supplied the Hebrew prophets with their most awful metaphors, whether it was their

task to describe the august majesty of God or the transcendent attributes of His will. Presently all around us was of a cast-metal black; the sheen on the sea resembled newly broken iron; down came the rain in torrents, and in its train the wind rushed-terrifically along.

I lose all faith in the wind when it forgets itself so far as to use the mast of the *Silver Cloud* as a whistle or flute. To this wild music the obedient waves soon waken up, and following fast join in a most furious dance. I lowered sail at once, whilst the wind howled and whistled loudly through the ropes and gearing of our vessel. Here my old felt hat, so light and soft, and hitherto so sober, became affected, resolved to join in the fury and shape a course of its own, and with one bound from the captain's head it lighted, say forty yards distant, among the waves—the shadow of an intention to attempt its recovery never crossing my mind. Margate was only 9 or 10 miles to leeward, and, close reefed, I bore away before such a sea as rises before such a wind in these parts.

The deep yawned behind, the huge billows rose like hills and broke, but the *Silver Cloud* never shipped an ounce of water over the stern. Flying before a gale, with a nice adjustment of sail, I believe she would put to shame, especially if they were loaded, many ships fifty times—yea, a hundred times

—her size. We entered Margate in style about 7.30; made, managed, and enjoyed a good tea; unwrapped the dry blankets from the tarpaulin, rolled our moist bodies in the dry wool, and steeped our brains for ten hours in “Nature’s sweet restorer”—“balmy sleep.”

In a London paper we afterwards read:—“Singular Phenomenon.—During the storm which burst over London on Thursday evening a very peculiar phenomenon was witnessed at Kilburn. Three peals of thunder were heard in rapid succession, and with the last a sheet of liquid fire seemed to fall into Bridge Street. The thoroughfare for some fifty yards seemed to be completely in flames, and a material similar to molten lead descended, which on reaching the ground coagulated.” The paper proceeds to detail the damage done, the “blue and yellow smoke,” and the consequent consternation. Doubtless, it was the tail of this storm that met us here, and before which we thought it the safest course to allow ourselves to be swept down the South Channel back into the harbour of Margate.

There was a shade of melancholy about the idea that our floating home had been under water in Calais Dock. Nor could the Frenchman’s affirmation be gainsaid—“It might have been worse.” Therefore, as we wait the wind, I purchase wood, cover the after part of our vessel with our own hands; so that

from Margate, on our return, you may call it a small boat, but the *Silver Cloud* is no longer, unless at will, an *open* small boat; she is decked and hatched from stem to stern.

Wednesday, 11th July, we pass from the shore of Kent to Essex, thus:—Having hauled out of the harbour of Margate by 2 A.M., for it dries, we start with the first of the flow tide by 5 o'clock morning, beat up the South Channel about 9 miles, clear the Last Sand, stretch across for the Girdler Lightship, watching to cross the Gilman, the Shivering, and the Knob Sands at the right place, and reach the Mouse Lightship. We are now over to the coast of Essex. Half an hour after the ebb tide turns in our favour, and with the wind abaft but light, we skirt the Maplin Sands, sail down the West Swin Channel, cross the Gunfleet Sand through the Spitway, and are in the Wallet by the afternoon. This is quite an orthodox passage. But the wind dies, and darkness falls on us ere we reach the harbour of Harwich.

In such circumstances, unless you have the lights or night marks as well studied as the day ones, there are only two courses open. One is—if it be calm, anchor outside—the calmness is likely the unforeseen reason why you have not reached your desired destination; the other is to follow up some vessel, say a fishing-smack, and take shelter in the place where he finds it. This latter we did at Harwich, and

anchored beside our dim, undefined, unintentional friend, in the lee of what we afterwards learned was the Landguard Point. Next day we rowed over in the calm, visited the old town of Harwich, received letters from Dundee, wrote in return, and daintily dined ashore. It was now nearly 2 P.M. We had not thought on sailing that day; but the tidal current had just begun to run in our course; the wind was south-east (an inshore side wind after we were started); the harbour was not inviting; two pleasure boats came in which, by sticking their jib-booms among our gearing, seemed to need our berth; so we left it to them for ever. There is no time to lose; up went the lug, and we are away—everything else is left to be done at sea. The jib is set, and in the fresh breeze with one “board” the *Silver Cloud* clears the Landguard Point and stands for Orfordness—distant 15 miles—without shifting the sail. If I was afraid of anything it was Orfordness, with its “strong ripples,” where my dingey was half-sunk going, and now as then we had a good inshore wind. But we had learned a few things—we had been abroad; we had learned to lash the dingey on deck, and, more than all, we had a deck to lay her on. She was firmly fixed on deck, with her end projecting over to windward, every hole and hatch closed, every sail close-hauled to keep us out as far as possible without tacking, and in two hours we

passed the Ness—the “ripples” never making themselves known.

By 7.30 we are abreast of Southwold—that is, in five and a half hours we have made a distance of 31 nautical miles. Here I was terribly deceived by my chart. Neither the one which I carried nor even those of the Admiralty show anything at Southwold but the two piers. As I lay to waiting a rise of tide here, during which time I could have almost reached Lowestoft, little did I dream that the tide rushed in through the narrow shallow channel between these piers to fill up the bed of a river reaching 12 miles inland! Why mark all the other rivers and even streams that indent the coast, and trace no such thing here? When about 60 yards from the piers the commotion of waters broke our small boat adrift, which we had by this time in tow, and drew my attention astern. We landed—yes, landed—on the wrong side of the south pier. Here the breakers lifted the *Silver Cloud* and gave her a dozen thumps on the gravel beach.

Such was the size of our vessel that if she had been wrecked here we were safe, for where she found ground we could easily jump ashore; and such was the size of our vessel that she was not wrecked, but with help was managed round the pier as the tide rose, notwithstanding the terrific rush of waters passing up the narrow channel between the piers.

Next morning the pump showed that she was still perfectly tight, and proved to be none of your eggshells that would easily break up; whereupon the *Silver Cloud* rose even higher in her skipper's estimation. We had a vessel that was tried by the wind, tried by the wave, and tried by the breakers on the beach! But let the chart-makers take note of the above flaw.

Leaving Southwold at noon to sail northward we enjoy a delightful breeze on our quarter, and smooth water, though the wind is off the sea. Now was the weather for sitting at sea in thin garments, whilst those even in glittering palaces ashore were compelled to endure the oppression of the highest summer temperature. The land was so near the sea-level, and our course so close to the shore, that the green fields, with their flowers and their fragrance, as well as the blue waters, with their silver sheen and shifting ornaments, lay all before our gaze.

It was remarked on board the *Silver Cloud* to-day that this was really a unique way of travelling: you put up a sheet of canvas to catch something which you did not see, but which carried you along so very delightfully.

Lowestoft glided past. Yarmouth, an old harbour to us, was at hand, and the day was wearing old; but wind and tide were with us, the season was advancing, the equinoctial gales might fall on us ere

we had sighted the Law, we feared that lassies in Dundee were beginning to break their hearts about us, and with such considerations Yarmouth is also left behind.

A cruise like this would suit a bachelor best—one who to all intents and purposes could go out of the world for a month or two without any one missing him, and who, while sitting upon the becalmed waters, or running back before the rising gale, as his vessel danced over the bracing wave, could swell the breeze with stanzas of the old song—

“I care for nobody, no, not I,
Since nobody cares for me.”

But we could not get the wind to understand as much, and just as we finished the navigation of the Cockle Gat, it fell asleep and left us in the calm, whereupon we made for the shore at Wintertonness.

Now the question was—back to Yarmouth, 8 miles, or anchor here till midnight, when the tide will begin again to run north? We would be none the worse of a good sleep. We were also short of sailing provisions, and such considerations drifted our thoughts back to Yarmouth.

The tidal current began to run south, and the *Silver Cloud* was allowed to drift with it; but I chose a new channel sufficient for our ship, inside the Caistor—that is, close along this lovely shore; but

in order to be safe from shoals, with mad currents on them, you must keep all the way within a very few fathoms of the beach.

What an eight-mile treat! It could not have been grander, nor smoother, nor even swifter this afternoon suppose we had been elevated on a real silver cloud. What a beautiful midsummer evening! The wind now came in gentle puffs, the sun was reclining in radiant glory, and previous to withdrawal behind the curtains of crimson in the western heavens, with a mild but celestial look, he had gilded all nature with brightest hues of gold. The sands here I thought the prettiest I had ever seen, and the beach was lined with gay summer visitors, all robed in richest holiday attire; and, as the tide is stronger than the wind, we have to watch that the *Silver Cloud* does not, as she threatened several times to do, go up backwards among the gentry! We had, once or twice, to touch her with the oar. Fie, fie, what manners, especially after being at France!

Yarmouth, at the height of its summer splendour, and with its most splendid side seawards, looks over the golden beach at us on the still waters. We are far from home, expecting to hear no homely sound; the waters are dead calm; our ship is carried with the tide in the twilight; we are in the easy reflective mood, our spirits like an idle harp, ready to reverberate in unison to any sound, when just as

we approach, from the grand ornamental Britannia Pier, a magnificent brass band suddenly strikes up the tune—which resounds like silvery thunder along the calm deep—

“Scots, wha hae wi’ Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has often led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to victory.”

Imagine the effect on the spirit of our skipper, who, to say the least, is a musical enthusiast.

A fisher advised us to bring up near this ornamental pier, as we were 2 or 3 miles from Gorleston, the entrance to Yarmouth harbour, and it would be better not to attempt an entrance till we got good daylight. This advice commended itself at once; down went the anchor with 10 fathoms of chain, as we knew the depth was $4\frac{1}{2}$; and the *Silver Cloud* brought up looked well in the presence of other boats, yachts, and even a man-of-war. We went ashore in the small boat, and amongst a number of dainties chose some “hot fried soles.”

We are on board again; the strains of music from the pier have died, the holiday hum of the beach is hushed, lamps are dangling on the deep, shining from ships riding at anchor, our own light o’erhead gleams on the glassy waters, and from among the blankets we peep out to bid the kind reader good-by till we get the beginning of another new day.

CHAPTER XVII.

Breakfast on the Yare—Trimingham Cliffs—Dusk on the Norfolk Shore—Midnight in the Wash—Day-dawn in Difficulty—Swept before the Gale—An Unprinted "Rule of the Road"—The *Mary and Janet*—Yorkshire Hills Again.

The wind gradually rose during the night from sou'-east, and a nasty chopping sea often disturbed my slumbers. By 6.30 morning we take the first of the tide, beat up 3 miles, rush in with the current, and at the very same spot as before "the mysterious boat and its two occupants, having entered the harbour, moored in the river." The ropes are fastened, the cuisine is in force by five minutes past eight, and since our appetite had been sharpened by a fresh morning breeze and a little enjoyable salt water spray, we do justice to a favourite breakfast—coffee and *jambon*. I was under shelter just in time. The barometer had been falling for three days, now came fresh gales from sou'-sou'-west, and by and by fishing vessels arrived with reefed sails, and some of them with their topmasts broken and carried away.

Pass now from Saturday till the following Thursday, 19th June, when about 5 A.M. we left Yarmouth Roads, with a light wind on our port bow, in com-

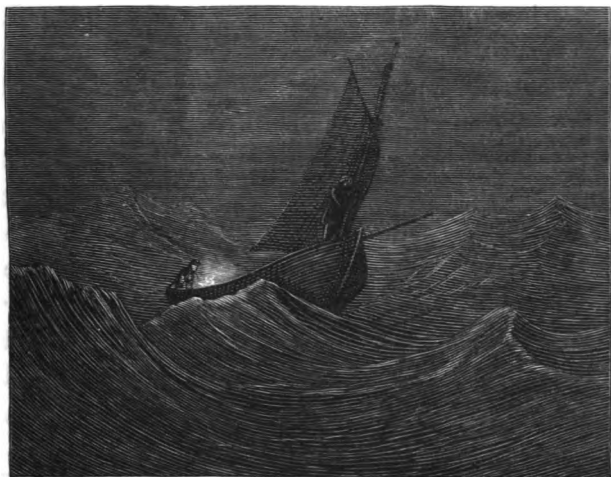
pany with about forty sail, which, like ourselves, had been weatherbound, and were going north.

The tide carried us along, but for a time the wind proved itself most fickle, shifting to all points of the compass, and sometimes changing six times in as many minutes, till about 4 P.M., when it seemed to have come to a decision, and blew off shore. Besides, by that time we had the tidal current with us again, and on we sped most splendidly along the Norfolk coast. Trimingham Cliffs are now passed, where on the calm morning, outward-bound, we had gone ashore for bread and a chat with the gentlemen in oilskins as we waited the tide. The fishermen recognized us, rowed off half-way, and roared the question over the waters, "Did you make France?" On the answer reaching them they simultaneously rose, hats in hand, and hurrahed. On went the *Silver Cloud*. Cromer, sitting on the brow of the cliff, with its cluster of homely dwellings, its massy church tower, its sprinkling of summer houses, famous principally for its lofty far-seen light-tower—the point of departure for all ships crossing the "Deep"—was soon left behind. On we speed 13 miles farther along the coast, and then we are abreast of Blackeney. It was now after eight o'clock evening. The water was smooth, the tide was rising, and here we could have entered, having made 40 miles on this side of Yarmouth.

But the Humber was in our minds. The breeze was so good, and favourable wind so rare, we never thought of entering Blackeney; and to pass between Burnham Flats and Docking Shoal we shape our course for the Humber, 50 nautical miles ahead. As we pass over the first ten of these it becomes dark; Cromer light flashes faintly astern; Hunstanton winks away in on the port, and the compass and lamp sitting above it are now our only guides. Several fishing-boats, on a previous September, after braving the perils of herring fishing in the south, on their way home to Scotland were wrecked on these shoals. As a compensation for the darkness preventing the discovery of any buoy, we knew that just at the darkest hour—twelve o'clock—the tide was full. The reader must remember that the day is sensibly shorter, and midnight consequently darker, during midsummer in these more southern latitudes, and this will be sufficiently explained by reminding him that if he were far enough in the other direction from Dundee—namely, north—there is no night at all.

Now came rain in the dark, then rose the wind, till we thought it safer to reef. Still on we dash through the thick pitchy midnight air over a sea of ink so black that I could not discover behind how the dingey was behaving in this commotion, for, dreading nothing awful, we had her still in tow.

Standing embracing the mast, I look ahead; but, eyelids open or closed, it is all the same—as black as soot, except here and there on a level with the ship there are sudden silvery gleams like patches of lightning, but of a milkier white. These are the foamy



MIDNIGHT IN THE WASH.

crests of the phosphorescent waves, which now rose in the locality of these vast shoals, swelled, and burst with indignation, pressed heavily with the wind as it footed its furious dance over the deep, whistling the while some shrill music in the minor scale on the mast of the *Silver Cloud*.

“The sleep of a labouring man is sweet,” and, illus-

trating these words of Solomon, at midnight in the very worst of it I went under the hatch and enjoyed an hour's slumber in my oilskins, without any blankets at all, my little mate being a splendid man in charge when there was sufficient cause of excitement to prevent sleep at the helm. For, after all, the worst has not been yet as much as hinted at. It was not that it was "pitch dark"—we had our lamp and compass, steered away nor'-west by nor', and could have approximately pointed out our position on the chart—day on the deep, without sight of buoy, beach, or beacon, is virtually as the night at sea. Nor was it the strength of the wind. We simply believe that it is not in the power of the wind, unassisted by the sea, to capsize the said *Silver Cloud* now, with her deck and the ballast as we had it fixed; for, suppose some fearfully sudden and tremendous gust were to lay her sails in the water, she would certainly right herself again, and that, too, suppose all on board were drunk and incapable of touching the helm, for, left to herself, her rig runs her up into the wind. Nor was it the waves; for if one of these monsters were so intruding as to allow his crest to come hissing over the gunwale of the buoyant little vessel, now with her deck on, she would in the most dignified manner pitch it off again. The day dawned, and the worst, so far as our reaching the Humber was concerned, remains to be told.

The wind veered, came right ahead, and there it remained, increasing in strength. We were at the north extremity of the Burnham Flats, 10 miles from the Norfolk coast, which was still in sight, and here a consultation was held between the captain and himself as to what course was most advisable; and mark the conclusion. I may suppose the reader is long ago convinced that he would have been perfectly safe along with us, and so I need not further waste ink on that score. The safest course was to turn. Then, 'bout ship, whilst we hoist the dingey on board to keep her from being submerged, smashing, or being smashed to pieces on the stern of the yawl, running before so rough a sea, and with three reefs in the lug-sail we are away. The waves rose like upheaving fields, and rolled and broke too; but the *Silver Cloud*, as with fine instinct, majestically mounts away. Soon as they embrace her, or threaten as much, she leaps forward, and on the top of the billow like a bird she sits free; and to show that we were perfectly safe in this sea the new deck never had the honour of casting overboard one ounce of water shipped over the stern during this whole run of 65 miles. Having run back 20 miles, we are again abreast of Blackeney, but the fairway buoy is mounting between heaven and earth, and the entrance is unapproachable. At best, however, we were shy of Blackeney, for two weeks before, we

had read the following in a newspaper:—"Blackeney, July 7th.—Fishing smack, *Scout* of Colchester, in taking Blackeney went ashore, and became a total wreck"—probably with seven men on board, each of them having entered Blackeney seventy times before.

We reached Yarmouth safe and sound by five o'clock on Friday afternoon. We had enjoyed a nice sail of about 130 miles, the only objection (mark, the only one we had to it) was that the season was advancing, and we were not thereby 130 inches nearer "bonnie Dundee."

"How would you do in a breeze of wind?" We not only calculated what we would do in a breeze of wind, but we resolved what we would do in the event of a gale rising from any of the four quarters of the heavens, and of this I shall give an illustration when we reach St. Abb's Head, where, being nearer home, it may be presumed most of us will understand it the better; but at present suffice to say that, in the event of a strong wind rising right ahead, you run back, and if the storm gathers, the tempest roars, the lightning gleams, the thunder shakes the heavens, the earth, the sea, your ship, and perhaps yourself, you make for the harbour you are probably best acquainted with, and, supposing your memory not the best, that is the one you last left.

Let no amateur like myself undertake my cruise, to "paddle his own canoe" to see the flowers of France, drown himself, and afterwards blame me with his death, unless he attend to the above plainly-stated rule of the road at sea for a pleasure-boat of 20 feet, namely—when there is a doubt or danger, and clearly it should seem the safest course, then run—run for your life—run back. I have not consulted the Lords of the Admiralty on the above rule, but I am quite sure they will all be ready to give it their hearty sanction.

A fishing-boat was bound from Yarmouth to Scarborough, 130 miles, just the distance we had sailed without touching land the last time we were out, only we left Yarmouth and arrived at Yarmouth. Speed would be secured by accompanying that vessel, for she would not touch at the intermediate ports, but, taking the straightest course, would not pause, unless through stress of weather, till she reached the port to which she was bound. But the danger to our craft was far greater, being a good part of the way not within 20 miles of land. Nor was it like getting a tow from a steamer, which could count on the very hour she would reach Scarborough; and if it were fine weather when you started, and no sign of anything else, in all probability it would be fine all the way; no, our fishing friend had to depend on the wind like ourselves.

The only way a vessel can save anything—boat, man, or other article—is by taking it on board. If she saves a crew it is by shipping them: if I save my small boat from the billows that have grown too big for her, or the ruthless waves which threaten to smash her to pieces on the stern of the yawl, I do so only by taking her on board. The mere presence of the mightiest ship in the world would not in the slightest degree awe the wind or frighten the sea from destroying a smaller or weaker one, though her numerous crew were all looking on. The sea has no sense of shame. The *Silver Cloud* then was no safer in company with another which could not hoist her on board; and as for the speed, I would have spurned it had I known the summer was to shine out so brightly and so long after I was home.

When building and fitting out the yawl, in our mind the words stood thus: safety, sleep, speed; occasionally on our voyage it was safety, speed, sleep; but for the 130 miles now under consideration it was speed, sleep, safety. If, however, it had blown so hard as to put my craft under, possibly I could have been taken on board my big companion (if he were to the fore by that time), and letting the *Silver Cloud* go to the bottom, I could have stood my chance like another fisherman on board a fisherman's ship.

Captain Hawes took my dingey on deck, the

Silver Cloud was attached by a long chain to the *Mary and Janet*—for that was her name—we both hoisted sail as if we were independent of one another, and thus in company left Yarmouth Piers at 3 P.M. on Monday, 23d July.

We had to sail and steer all the same as if we had been alone, with this exception—there was no chart work; our mark was the large tanned sails of the fisher, and his compass light which loomed ahead even in the darkest hour; and the crew of the *Silver Cloud*, relieving each other at the helm, that night enjoyed some sleep, even amid the tumbling, bumping, and splashing. Yes, good sleep, after the fashion of the East, with your clothes on. Let those who turn and toss on their soft warm couches without enjoying the real article, and who are encased like tender flowers in a hothouse, just try the sea—the grand blue sea.

The *Mary and Janet's* crew consisted of seven fine fellows, all Englishmen; and the captain, if "by their fruits ye shall know them," is one of the finest fellows that ever stepped a vessel's deck. With nothing short of a parent's care did he constantly cast his eye over upon the small Scotch stranger. He told me afterwards he would not have taken my place that night for a hundred pounds. This I could never understand, unless it be by what I have already explained—the possibility of a storm rising

when we were far from land; but from anything that did occur, and there was occasionally a good breeze, my vessel behaved as well as his, which he never tried to deny. Doubtless from the deck of a comparative giant we seemed small upon the waters, especially after dusk, as we mounted, crashed, and cut our way through the crystal surface of the deep.

The winds had favoured us. By 6 P.M. next day we rounded Flamboro' Head, with its white cliffs rising from the sands of gold; and with an off-shore gentle breeze, on a sea of molten silver, in sight of our destination, we softly sailed along this lovely shore, where at present lies the wreck of the steamship *Gloamin'* of Dundee.

As the sun was sinking behind the glowing purple of the Yorkshire hills we cast our anchors in the beautiful bay of Scarborough.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mountain Gusts—Becalmed at Staiths—Captain Cook's Birthplace
—Dinner Denied—What Sent Cook to Sea—In the Pulpit with
a Black Eye—The Subject—The Penzance Men—Under Sail
for Sunderland—Through the Breakers for the Letters.

We had only anchored in the Bay of Scarborough among the fishing vessels, not entering the harbour, having been long enough there before; so at seven next morning, after a good sleep, notwithstanding the swell caused by recent southerly winds, we bade the *Mary and Janet* good-bye, and held along the coast. The wind at first was westerly—that is, off the land—and very squally. The cliffs rise high along the shore, and down the mountain gorges the wind came rushing in great gusts. When you are cutting the water with some speed the helm is all-powerful in the event of being suddenly caught with more wind; but when there are alternate gusts and calms the helm is of little account for safety. You must sit with the lug-sheet in hand, ready as if by instinct to let the rope slip through your fingers in the event of a sudden stroke from the heavens. You cannot see it coming off the land as you can see it at a distance on the sea; and during 10 miles' sail-

ing here was the only time in my thousand miles' cruise that I felt it necessary to sit with the sheet in hand, ready to let the rope run through the block.

The barometer had been rising; the coast here trends in a nor'-westerly direction; and by the time we are abreast of Whitby the wind comes right ahead, and hence, when the tide suits so that we can glide safely over the bar, we enter this old harbour.

In Whitby we were told that several cobs and small craft had come to grief on this part of the coast—that is, sailing along the coast, with the wind off the land, as we had it, they had been capsized.

Wondering whether Dundee was always in the same place—fearing at least that some of the things in it might by this time have shifted their latitude, and therefore getting anxious to see for ourselves, next morning—now the 26th July—at 6 A.M. we start with the tidal current northward. Becalmed, we only made 7 miles by eleven o'clock; saw a number of cobs and fishing craft at anchor, and others entering a place called Staiths, and resolved, while it was calm and the tide running south, to bring up here and wait the decision of the wind. No sooner had we let go our anchor than a fine old fellow, the skipper of the boat riding nearest us, asked if I “would 'ave a few fresh fish”—a presentation by

way of hospitality and welcome among the tanned lug-sails and strange crews.

Lying in the calm beside our new friend, suddenly we heard a crash ashore. We look. It was a piece of the cliff fallen from its lofty eminence descending, and as it descended dissolving into dust as it reached the water's edge, where it would be washed away with the nor'-easterly waves—an ocular demonstration which we did not expect to witness of what we dwelt on (see Chapter VIII.) when outward bound—England is being eaten away.

We went ashore. What a queer-looking place is Staiths. It sits on an irregular steep running up from the shore or creek, and the queer houses lie huddled together in the most irregular manner, as if they had been emptied over the brow of the hill, each taking the position chance assigned to it, like a load of stones emptied out of a cart. We walked slowly through it, poking into the different nooks. Some of the houses were not much larger, and certainly not much more beautiful outside, than many a dog-house we had seen; but on reflection we concluded that possibly the inmates there were as happy as—nay, far happier than kings and queens. They had the sea, which painted their cheeks with the hues of health, and merrily they plied their ancient calling on the waves, or handled the fish with songs upon the sandy shore. And did we not know a minister

who had left a manse of nine apartments and a garden, and who was now enjoying far happier hours than he ever found in the manse, though his kitchen, parlour, dining-room, drawing-room, study, and bedroom, which had to be shared by another male, were at present all in one, the whole space being only 7 feet by 7, and the ceiling only 4 feet at the highest from the floor, necessitating a locomotion inside akin to that of a collier at his work—but that was close to the sea. The sea is the grand compensation.

We contrived when convenient to dine ashore as frequently as possible, for otherwise it was a continual “tea, tea,” or as the Irishman says, “the coffee tay.” I was told that I could have dinner at the hotel; but on presenting myself and making inquiry the lady supreme, looking at my sailor trousers, replied that she was not making any that day. With dishevelled hair, and her garments about her as if they had been flung on in the morning with a shovel, I am sure that I was better dressed than this dame; but that was nothing to the point. To her I did not seem a subject off whom she could get much to pay the rent, and, dumb and dinnerless, I had to go. I did not feel sick, however, on account of this denial, because on board we had Wiltshire bacon, boiled corned beef, good bread and butter, the fresh fish presented to us by our new friend the old skipper; and we had spirit of wine to cook withal—at a saving likely that would

have gone a long way to replace with good tweed the trousers that offended the hotel queen, if money had been wanting for that purpose.

As we rowed off again to the *Silver Cloud* and looked behind, if we were thinking anything at all it was this—Can any good thing come out of Staiths? Ah! listen. We are beside the old skipper again, and he not only gives us the fresh fish in a present, but he gives us a story to the bargain. “Do you see them ’ouses over the ’ill theree? That is w’eere Captain Cook was born. And that theree Staiths is w’eere he served his apprenticeship to the grocery trade. There was a new shillin’ in the till one day; young Cook thought he’d like to ’ave it, so he took the new one out and put an old one in for it. The master missed the new one, kicked up a row, and this was the hoccasion of Cook’s goin’ to sea.” Some believe, with a good show of reason too, that it is the stomach and not the brain that does the thinking for man, and now that mine was empty and therefore active, ready to leap smartly at conclusions, I could not help thinking that the grocer must have been the hotel-lady’s great-grandfather, and that the tendency to this unkindly blundering must run in the blood.

We let the old skipper *pre* our corned beef. By this time his crew came off drunk, though we had come off dinnerless, and having hoisted sail he bore

away once more over the darkening sea in search of the scaly tribe. The wind veered to north, rose, and raised a jumble among the adjoining rocks. "A bad harbour is better than a good roadstead." So said some sailors next day, and so thought the skipper of the *Silver Cloud* before he heard it said; so up comes the anchor, and before wind and tide in one hour we re-enter the harbour of Whitby—the port from which young Cook, the future navigator, naval commander, and famous discoverer, first sailed as apprentice on board a collier brig.

The Rev. Mr. Linn was resolved that I should address his people, and fearing that I might be off before Sabbath, nothing would do but I should give the address at the Wednesday evening prayer-meeting. My great difficulty in the preparation on such occasions was to get my hands made passable for the pulpit; for with tar off the ropes and rust off the anchor chain, if you were, like the preachers of the New Testament, to "beckon with the hand," you were likely to give your hearers a fright from quite a new quarter entirely. It did not matter; my old college friend pushed me up into this new pulpit before these new people, and this time, in addition to the black hands, I had a black eye! He introduced me thus:—"The Rev. Wm. Forwell, from Dundee, who is just now taking a cruise along the coast in his little yacht, and who has been as

far as France, will address us, and perhaps he will give us a few notes on what he has seen in his cruise."

I began by saying—"Your minister has introduced me as the Rev. So-and-So; but I can assure you as I sail along, though I am supposed to be many a thing, I am never taken as a minister. Sometimes—indeed very often—I am taken for a smuggler, sometimes for a pilot; sometimes I am supposed to be the old master of some steamer that has plied between these ports now taking a sail in a small boat; sometimes when lying among the fishers windbound I am taken for a teacher of navigation; and this morning, when entering your harbour, I was asked by a man afloat, eager to do business, if I had got many herring; but I am never taken as a clergyman." This last touch about the herrings proved too much for the risible faculty, and from the shape and sheen of their faces I now concluded that, whatever the notes on the cruise would suit, they would not do, except very sparingly, at a congregational prayer-meeting, not even in England, far less in old solemn sober Scotland. As for myself, suppose I had been inclined, I could only have laughed with the one eye; the other was too much swollen for that, and I was now feeling it terribly in the road.

The minister is much beloved, and certainly the flock had as much faith in him as to believe that

he would not set up a character to lead their devotions and direct their minds who had been damaged in the locality of the optical organs by boxing. They would believe that, or try their best to believe it, but they might not be able to keep their imaginations occasionally from taking a jump in the opposite direction.

In these circumstances I chose for my subject blind Bartimeus, and brought in the black eye as an illustration by saying—"How precious is the mere physical sight—what will men not do for it? The other night, on the deep, when something broke, and in the act of fastening it, as my little ship swung to and fro, the end of a rope struck this eye, bringing the blood. I thought I had lost the sight. But oh, how glad was I when I found that I could still see through the blood—the sight still preserved! But the spiritual sight is of infinite more value than the natural—that vision which distinguishes the path of life and the way of death, and by which we survey the splendours of the spiritual world," &c.

The eye thus disposed of, we got on comfortably. The following Sabbath came before a favourable wind (unless it were on Saturday afternoon, when we would not sail), the eye was a shade better, the hands a shade whiter; and we enjoyed more than once preaching the gospel out of this new Presbyte-

rian pulpit, in this old Yorkshire town where Cædmon first sang the praise of God.

There was one thing which enlivened and ennobled the whole aspect of this place—that was the presence of about fifty fishing vessels from Penzance, away near the Land's End—600 miles here from home. These are the fine tidy yacht-like vessels; and the crews are the cleanly, well-to-do, godly, warm-hearted fellows. The rest of the boats went out to fish on Sabbath, but not one of these boats moved. Hundreds of boats hail from that quarter. Many of them begin their fishing on the west coast of England, and as the season suits shift their ground, fish the shores of Ireland, come through the Caledonian Canal, wear southwards and homewards again along the east coast of Scotland and England, and during the entire circuit their whole fleet of boats preach in the most powerful way a sermon on the Fourth Commandment. They are mostly Methodists. These fine fellows were exceedingly interested in us, looked upon our long voyage with so short a boat as a great achievement, expected to see it in print some day, and I had to promise one of the captains that I would write him after reaching Dundee.

We invariably left our small boat in their charge when going ashore; and, returning on Sabbath evening to go on board, crossing their vessels, they requested us to go below, when they showed us how

they lived, where they slept, how they cooked, and showed us for acceptance some fine cold pudding and beef, making a dozen apologies for not being able to treat us better. No apology was needed. With all deference to the ladies ashore, we must confess that we never relished anything more than we did this masculine-made Penzance pudding.

Some of the boats were from St. Ives and the neighbouring ports; but we gave them all one designation if from that quarter; and on board the *Silver Cloud* the Penzance men were set up as moral models—for during the rest of the voyage, when anything in human form offended my mate, I soon heard him grumbling out, "Och, they're not like the Penzance men." I need not relate how I spent whole eleven days here—how, when it was calm and sunny, we varnished the bottom of our vessel, and made other improvements on her; how we were ashamed so often to accept of the hospitality of my reverend friend and his good lady; how some days the harbour was barred with monstrous breakers against the outgoing even of the largest fishers, till we began to think that a passage from the Town of Jet to the Town of Jute was to be denied us altogether.

Monday, 6th August.—We resolved to start with the first of the tidal stream, and left Whitby harbour about 2 o'clock morning. It was calm, and

progress slow till about mid-day off the mouth of the Tees, 20 miles from Whitby, when a steadily-increasing breeze sprang up from sou'-sou'-east, and "carried us over the tide" to Sunderland. Here, if you were in a hurry, appeared the inconvenience of having letters lying for you in any place short of home. The wind was on our quarter, and now as strong as we wished; the tidal current had just turned in our favour. I might have run 40 miles during the five hours of daylight that remained; and if we let such an opportunity pass we may wait in vain for it a fortnight again. Be it so. We must enter for the letters; so in we dash among the waves, and moor in smooth water in the southern outlet of Sunderland. The next best thing to entering the Tay is surely an epistle from "The Hill."

CHAPTER XIX.

Sending Word per Steamer—Mounting the Monsters—The Gale Rising—Supper with the Fishermen—Inside the Ferns—Breakers off Immanuel Head—Berwick Bay—Berwick—An Illustration of our Calculations—Caution to Boatmen—Impartiality of the Sea.

Soon as we were moored in the port of Sunderland we sought out our letters; and as they contained touching references to our long absence from Dundee we thereupon presented ourselves to the *Harvest Queen*—which vessel was lying near—and commissioned one of her men, if he should reach Dundee before us, to go to a certain place in Hilltown and declare he had actually with his own eyes seen us in the flesh, and that we were so near the borders of Scotland. The wind from sou'-east continued to rise after we were in the harbour, and in the fore-part of the night the sea ran so high that it swept the herring-fishers further north back into their harbours. We had run before such seas in the south that the question of quantity in regard to the wind ceased to be considered at all; the only question with us now was the direction.

By three in the morning we resolved to start, the only difficulty appearing to us being the getting out;

for though by this time the wind had died, having been from east-sou'-east, in its fury it had left a wild swell to which the Southern Entrance, as the name implies, was fully exposed. But with the combined force of oar and sail we bounded over the bar. From a fall in the mercury during the night I hoped for a sou'-west wind to lay the swell and lash us along.

About breakfast time the barometer fell further, and now the wind, which seemed to take some time to "make up its mind," whilst we were tossing and jolting and jerking on the swell as if to unfasten all our gearing, fixed itself and began in earnest from east-sou'-east, the direction in which it had caused the commotion, so that if it grew very strong, being so much inshore it would raise the waves to mountains, and close up every port against us short of the Firth of Forth.

The breeze increased, the water mountains roughened, the tide being crossed by the wind, and the *Silver Cloud*, now in the trough and now on the top of one of these monsters, but well away from the shore, flies along the Northumbrian coast.

The question here was, Amble or Berwick? The entrance to Amble we know well; and with this wind it is partially sheltered by the Coquet Island. But Berwick is 32 miles nearer home, and with this breeze we can soon go there. But what about the

entrance to Berwick with this sea? And will darkness not fall on us before we have passed the Ferns?

I was sitting in the cabin examining the chart as to the passage inside the Ferns, when one of the water giants already alluded to raised his head, and squirted about three gallons of brine (over the quarter, never over the stern) slap on the back of the helmsman, some of the drops of which descended the hatch and came spattering on the chart. I pounced my head through the hatch and gave the sporting monsters a look, as much as to say, Who did that? But he was off. This, however, decided the harbour. We rounded the Coquet, adjusted our sail, made everything snug before taking our aim, and swept into Amble, the harbour of Warkworth, in splendid style at twelve o'clock noon.

After we were in the harbour the gale grew fierce, and with gratitude for guidance thither we ate our dinner—the wind being in the same direction as the memorable gale of August 3d last year.

We had just moored in the harbour, now within 100 miles of home, when some strange fishermen shouted out, "Where are you bound to?" On the answer being given I heard a young fellow grunting to himself, "You'll never reach Dundee in that craft." This statement could have been treated in two ways—either to hold it in silent contempt, or announce for their amazement that that craft had just been at

France. I did neither. I ordered the man that was standing beside him in the boat to fling him into the water; but my command was as little attended to by them as their prediction was heeded by me.

We had become too cunning to be caught sleeping in an inn ashore on account of our bedding being wet; but we had tea for a change in the old lodging; and when returning to the harbour we found that the fishing-boats, after trying it to-night again, had been driven back from the sea by the storm, and in the boat over which we had to pass—a boat belonging to Newbigging—the men were at supper—biscuits, butter, big bowls of tea, and “fine caller herrin’, just new come frae the sea.” “’Ave a ’errin’ with us, captain,” said one of them as I passed. “’Ave one, do, they are nicely cooked, just try.” We sat down, partook of their fare, and in the twilight talked away as we sat round the dying embers that had cooked the herrings to perfection.

Next morning we are awake at half-past four; the barometer had registered a further fall; the storm-stayed sons of the sea were all asleep, the wind was west what was of it, we hoped it would continue west, and resolved to start once more.

There was a tremendous swell outside, a wild roll on the bar, and breakers too, but with sail and oar and strain of muscle we soon send ourselves free of the land. The swell rose in acres, and as the eye

swept along the vast extent of water that heaved and lifted us heavenwards, it was simply awful; worst of all there was not sufficient wind to keep the sails bent.

The barometer, now very low, slightly rose. What! Do you remember what that means? "The first rise after low denotes a stronger blow." The westerly puff with which we had started now died, and off Dunstanborough Castle the wind fixed itself in earnest again in the sou'-sou'-east, and increased; so, resolving to make progress as long as our ship would stand it, I set the jib abreast with an oar on the side opposite to the lug-sail, and dashed through the waters. The sun was shining, but the lower atmosphere was thick, and at a distance only that which was white could be descried shining through the mist. The inner Fern is sighted; kept on the starboard. Now turns the tide, and we must stem a strong current, which being crossed by the wind, raises the sea; but under pressure of the two above-named sails, which are set in square-sail fashion, on we dash and presently are inside the Ferns.

Now on the starboard keep the Goldstone, where sank the *Pegassus*; look ahead for a black buoy on that side, and a red one on the port, which guards against the dangers of the Holy Isle—the island and the castle still lying bedded in the mist. On we fly over the tide in smoother water, somewhat sheltered

from the ocean's reach by the Ferns. Now pass the spots of interest—St. Cuthbert's Isle on the star-board, Bamborough on the port, royal residence of old, in whose churchyard rest the bones of the heroine of these waters. A white beacon which stands on the eastern shore of the Holy Isle now gleams through the mist over the bow, and soon we find it marks Emmanuel Head. Then appears the castle—

“A solemn, huge, and dark-red pile,
Placed on the margin of the isle.”

Oh, how I would have liked to spend a Sabbath-day to worship here, calling up stories twelve centuries old of mighty men of God!

“For, with the ebb and flow, its style
Varies from continent to isle;
Dryshod o'er sands, twice every day,
The pilgrim to the shrine finds way;
Twice every day the waves efface
Of staves and sandalled feet the trace.”

The Holy Island harbour is away in on our port, if we knew how to find it out; but the wind is right inshore, and to try and miss is certain death. There is nothing like a pier-head to steer for, though the breakers thunder against it, the foam rages around and envelops it in sheets of white spray—these only mark minutely out the dangers to be shunned.

The gale increases, the sea whitens, down goes the jib-sail, two reefs of the lug-sail are taken in, and

now for the worst part of the passage—Emmanuel Head, the eastern point of the Holy Isle, for here the sea, unbroken by the Ferns, shall come sweeping in with the full force of the whole reach of the German Ocean, and here the full fury of the blast will meet in battle the strongest of the tidal current rushing round the Head. It is not necessary for me to say the *Silver Cloud* went through it. We now steer by compass till we discover the exact point of the coast where sits the town of Berwick, which, we know, is 9 miles from Emmanuel Head.

Hey, yonder is the pier! Look the watch—(the watch hangs in the cabin when at sea. Watches and chains are not for tars in a tempest)—half-an-hour from high water here. Will you manage it, lass, before it turns? You *must*. Ah! that's the breeze—hiss-s—you need no more sail. Along the bay we mount among the "white horses" that gallop with us to dash themselves upon the beach and roar like thunder. Bring out the life-belts. Are you sure yours is well tied on? Let me see. Then here we go. In case of mistake we cannot turn—we "make a spoon or spoil a horn"—the land we must reach by sailing, swimming, or by sinking. Hey, there she mounts! In we go tumbling over the bar. To right of us the waves run along the pier; to left the white seething waters roar upon the bank. Now, now, helm hard to starboard. We are in

abreast of Spittal. Luff her up, down goes the sail, and the anchor in smooth water beside the fishermen



from the Forth, with their 50-foot boats that have for four days been storm-stayed here.

After dinner, as we stood and viewed from our cabin the waves flying over the pier-head, and like mountains breaking a good way outside the entrance, the fishermen said if we had been an hour later we could not have entered. So *they* said. What we say is, that our vessel never shipped one drop of water this day—the new deck has never proved of use. We knew well the time

of tide that suits to enter here, and the only thing that prevented us from running on to Dunbar, 22 miles further, was the fact that the tide would be ebbd by the time we reached it, and we had never seen the harbour there.

Berwick being a new town to us, we go ashore for tea, when we tasted salmon from the Tweed—very good.

As we strolled through this quiet old town, peace seemed to sleep along its pavements; and one could scarcely believe it had been roused so often to serve as a theatre on which have been played so many important acts in the great drama of the past. Wallace's left arm was sent to be suspended here; and since that day many a bloody sight have the men of Berwick seen.

Friday morning we leave Berwick harbour at 5 A.M., the wind being west and gusty, and before we make 6 miles it seems advisable to shorten sail. This decided that we stop at Eyemouth, and enter with the fishing-boats until we had a more southerly wind, or at least to make acquaintance with the entrance as we pass.

I promised when I reached this quarter to give an illustration that I not only calculated what I would do in a "breeze of wind," but what I would do in the event of a dangerously strong wind rising from any of the four quarters of the heavens.

First, let it be understood that the buoyancy and build of our boat are such that the extent of her powers in running has never been ascertained—all the swells and seas and storms we have run before she has never shipped one drop of water over the stern, and the deck is there now to fling it off suppose she did.

Well, we are at Eyemouth, we wish to cross the Firth of Forth, preferring to run up the south side some distance before we strike across for Fifeness; indeed, we would like to see the celebrated old town of Dunbar, believing it to be a fine point from which to take our departure. Three miles to the north of us, that is 3 miles on our way, is the point which has been described thus—"Frowning darkly on the waters of the North Sea rose St. Abb's Head—the proudest headland in Europe—the dark waves tumbling themselves wrathfully against its jagged sides." Suppose we start then from Eyemouth and proceed tolerably till we are abreast of St. Abb's, or to make it as bad as possible, I shall suppose we have got 2 miles past the Head, so that St. Abb's, with its notorious dangers, is between me and the nearest harbour—Eyemouth—which is now 5 miles away. Imagine me here caught with an incipient gale! Suppose that it rises from the north, I have two courses open, the preferable one to be decided upon by the particular point of the compass to right

or left of north from which the gale blows. I can run to Dunbar in 40 minutes with such a strong wind on my starboard quarter, or run to Eyemouth in 30 minutes with the wind on my port quarter.

Suppose it comes from the east. If it rises so terribly quick that in 40 minutes it lashes the foam over the rocks at the entrance to Dunbar, and that place is unapproachable—whew! I can run up the Forth.

Again, suppose it comes from the south, then the wind is off-shore. Let it blow a hurricane, I can sail along in smooth water with as little sail as I please.

Lastly, suppose it comes from west, in 10 or 15 minutes I can be in the lee of St. Abb's Head, and with short sail and smooth water I can re-enter Eyemouth at pleasure, the harbour behind me, which I have explored in case I need to seek it in a storm. This is only a sample of our calculations, given here because on ground familiar to most of my readers. If they think I ever thoughtlessly or madly left any port without such calculation, I hope they will now change their minds.

See, too, that you do not carry too much sail. Look at the three pilots the other week off Greenock. They would carry so much sail; that sail and their management capsized the boat, and one of them, in very sight of the piers, was drowned—observe, only in a river.

At this very Dunbar, since we were there, twelve picked men went out to exercise in the lifeboat—mark, the lifeboat. We all know the story. The “melancholy accident” took place on Saturday, 13th October. The newspaper says, “The boat, it should be mentioned, was launched with full foresail, jib, and reefed mizzen.” That sail capsized the lifeboat, left the twelve struggling in the water, and two of them were drowned. Now, if the captain of the *Silver Cloud* had been on board with full charge (and he takes very good care not to go much on board of such craft without full charge), it is not too much to say that the “melancholy accident” would not have occurred, for in the “severe gale” described he would not have allowed either the mizzen or jib to be hoisted at all, nor would the foresail have been set unreefed. Oh! it makes one’s blood boil to see the amount of sail you sometimes see on a small, poorly ballasted boat, all to suit some childish hobby-horse idea of speed unworthy of men, whilst the lives of all on board hang on the mere turning of one man’s wrist—he sits playing with their breath in his hand—this mad life-and-death game depending on his agility to push down the helm and luff in the event of being suddenly caught, which agility is useless if by any means he has allowed the way to go off his boat. I had rather go to New Zealand with a careful cautious captain, who had his repu-

tation all to make, than trust myself as far as to Newport from Dundee in charge of some of these.

Grand honest old sea! she does in daylight precisely as she would do in the dark. She is no respecter of persons; takes no cognizance of human certificates; time has no effect on herself, and so to her it is no qualification. In the case of a tar of fifty years' experience, and especially if he has in a couple glasses of grog, she will ignore the fact that she ever had seen him before. Nor does she regard your lingo—you may tie the rope, or bend it on, luff or turn the bow to windward, turn to left or port—it is all the same to her what is said if the thing is done. So we may sail and even sleep without a certificate on the broad honest fragrant bosom of the grand fresh old sea!

CHAPTER XX.

Head Wind off St. Abb's—The Wind Catching our Beard—The Pilots off Dunbar—Dunbar Harbour—Prognostications of the Weather—Dunbar Astern—An "Auld Scotch Sang"—An Old Story—Sighting May Island—His Majesty of the Main.

At Eyemouth we parted with the reader in our last except in supposition to show what we would do in the event of being suddenly caught by a storm. It was about 8 morning. We had come from Berwick. The wind was westerly, and we feared it would be right ahead after rounding St. Abb's. One fisherman said one thing, another said another, and since we were only 3 miles from the head, and could make it without tacking, we resolved, in absence of better occupation, to sail thence and for ourselves see how the land lay, and by that time the wind with regard to it. This done—that is, abreast of St. Abb's—it was clear we could reach Dunbar only by beating. The direction of the wind was a little off shore, but nearly ahead. However, the tide was with us, and Dunbar, 13 miles from St. Abb's, is now our desired haven.

With one tack after another we wore up the Haddington coast. Meanwhile the west-sou'-wester grows

stiffer and stiffer, but the points of land jutting out break the sea; and when we are subjected to overmuch of the flyboat motion, by dashing too far out into the Firth, then 'bout ship and back into smoother water. But it did blow. The curly crests of the breakers that rolled in among the reefs of rock were caught up by the off-shore wind, and the foam was flung hissing seawards, to fall in thick white showers of spray. The mate on previous occasions had lost two caps with the wind; I had lost one—all when it was so strong that we never dared dream of their recovery—but here it occurred to me to have a care of my hair. I have learnt since that, when sailors are supposed to be “spinning a yarn” in describing the strength of the wind, they sometimes speak of it blowing off their hair; but surely they may be forgiven when, without the slightest knowledge that such was the case, to a matter-of-fact “cove” like our skipper the thing was actually suggested from the original source. Having on a tightly-fitting red cap, I had no fear of losing it, and so when the wind was making my clothes musical, the idea of my beard leaving me without warning, just as my old faithful servant the felt hat had left on the coast of Kent, was suggested here on the Haddington shore.

Within a few miles of Dunbar the tide turned, and now we had the tide in addition to a strong wind against us; but with two reefs in the lug-sail, the

hatches closed, and the small boat lashed on deck, shifted to windward according as we were on the port or starboard tack, we ploughed through it, being well watched the while from the locality of Dunbar.

As we neared that town a boat of fishermen came off to the small stranger, and shouted, "Where are you bound for, skipper?" Ans.—"Going into Dunbar." "One of us will steer you in if you allow us." "What is your charge?" "Leave that to yourself, sir." "All right, jump aboard." One of them sprang in, the rest sought the shore, and I gave him the helm and lug-sheet in charge. Once in a former little yacht I was nearly wrecked at Granton by giving the management to a crew of fine blue jackets with shining brass buttons that came on board from a large pleasure yacht; and once in that same little yacht, when seeing a difficulty myself where the fishermen saw none, by intrusting the sailing to them I was unnecessarily run upon a lee shore; but this Dunbar man was the cleverest fellow I ever saw jump on board a strange boat. After we had shipped our quondam pilot two tacks were still necessary to bring us far enough to windward in order to lie the new harbour; and now he steers for it, steers right for the brow of a frowning rock. When within 20 yards of the opening he shouts, "Do you see it yet, captain?" "Not I." But soon it opened up. What

a cosy place! We would require no pilot to enter it again.

Of the twenty strange ports this is the only one where we accepted the services of a pilot. After your nerves being on the stretch for hours, as well as your muscles occasionally, and your hair, if not blown away, pretty well brushed with the breeze, it created an agreeable sensation, opposite a strange harbour beset with rocks, and a strong tidal current, whilst a strong breeze was blowing—a harbour previously described by those who knew it as “a nasty place”—to be freed of all care, especially as after the fisherman got the helm, and she gave a swing or two, and I questioned whether she had not just enough of sail, “No fear of her,” said he, as he glanced across her fishing-boat beam; “no fear of her, *SHE* can do it.”

Over the harbour mouth where we have entered hang the venerable ruins of the castle where, after the battle of Bannockburn, Edward II. took refuge previous to his further flight by sea to Berwick. Though the castles of the coast have mouldered somewhat, doubtless the headlands, the promontories and cliffs—the “everlasting hills” which to-day sent down their winds in such force as to try our pluck ere they suffered us a refuge in Dunbar—wear much the same aspect as they did that day when he looked round on them, and they frowned him out of the

Firth. Ah! yes, as we tread the pavements of the principal street, and pronounce the name Dunbar, not only by historical association but by Jacobite song are we reminded that we are stepping upon classic ground. The Bass Rock, 6 miles from this, it is well known, is the spot in Great Britain that held out longest for King James II. and the Stuart dynasty. Here, however, I shall not detain the nautical reader with dates of deeds and stories of the heroine Black Agnes, of Mary Queen of Scots, and at a later period of Cromwell and Prince Charlie.

Next morning (Saturday, 11th August) we awake and rise before six o'clock. Wind westerly. Stood and considered whether I should sail, and when you cannot decide at once you are apt to hear what others say. An old fisher advised us to wait for a better day. A fisherman will tell you with an air of certainty how the wind is to be; but he is oftener wrong than right; and after he has been wrong for fifty days, on the fifty-first day he will give the prediction without expressing the least doubt, or just in the same way as if he had never been wrong in his life. That is my experience of this voyage of fourteen weeks among them. But perhaps those north of the Tay can give the real genuine article in the shape of prescience with regard to the weather, and those between this and France only make a spurious imitation of their northern friends which never turns

out the real thing. One who lived much among fishermen once said, "Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky." But the fishermen and seafaring men are not to bear all the blame; for in this, as in other things, the demand creates the supply. A burly minister on Bridlington Quay, the first wet day we had, approached, supposing me a real tar, for I had on my yellow oilskins and sou'-wester, and asked, "Is this rain to continue?" I answered, "I don't know. I am not very sure, but there are fifty men over there that will tell you at once; but mark the opposite of what they say, and you are as likely to be right as otherwise."

But since I had been honoured, observe, by having attributed to me the power to tell, or rather foretell, did I prove that I was made of different stuff from the fishermen? Not I. I think I made a fair beginning. Remembering that the barometer had slightly fallen before I left the cabin, and looking round I saw that it *was* raining, and ventured to say that I thought it would continue for some time. The clergyman was so far satisfied that the conversation between the cloth and the canvas continued under the harbour-shed.

Well, we *blethered* with the old salt on Dunbar Quay until seven o'clock, and thus lost an hour. It was quite true the clouds were floating from north—even the barometer had risen—but the wind *was*

still from west, and though we had hesitated, start we did by seven.

A finer breeze, smoother water, or a breeze from a better direction for crossing the Firth of Forth we could not have desired. There was just one want—it was misty, and the atmosphere so thick that we could not see half a mile distant. The first thing to be “picked up” was the May Island, 11 miles from Dunbar, directly in our way—compass course, north-east by east a quarter east. But, allowing for lee-way and the ebb tidal current, we held the bow exactly on magnetic north.

And now, as we leave the southern shore of the Firth, and the Haddington hills as well as the features of Dunbar are merging in the mist, appearing to the eye as we look behind just as a story heard in all the vividness and susceptibility of youth appears to the mind as the voyage of life proceeds, to an Ayrshire man, and specially to an Ayr man, one other association with these hills besides those recorded was inevitable.

What Ayr laddie has not visited Cassilis big house, about six miles from the “auld toun,” where “Johnnie Faa,” disguised as a gypsy, and attended by a band of fourteen of these desperate outcasts, appeared before the gate, and in the absence of her lord, the sixth Earl, sang the lady away?

"They sang sae sweet and sae complete
That doun cam' our fair lady;"

and

"As soon as they saw her weel fa'ured face
They cuist the glaumoure o'er her."

The "glaumoure" in this instance, however, being a glance from the face of "Johnnie Faa," the lover of her youth.

And who that has not only traversed the "Banks and braes," but also paddled in the bed of "Bonnie Doon," has not also crossed that celebrated stream at the "gypsies' stanes," where the lady in flight crossed in company with the gypsies?

She had borne the earl three children. Still at sight the passion for the object of her early love irresistibly revived.

"Gae tak' frae me my silk mantil,
And bring to me a plaidie;
For I will travel the warld owre
Alang wi' the gypsy laddie."

The earl, "a stern Covenanter," returned from the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, found his lady gone, heard the story of the servants, and, abstaining from food and sleep, equipped a strong band, pursued, and overtook the fugitives 4 miles from the castle. They were all brought back, and the fifteen, including "Johnnie Faa," were hanged on "the dule tree," which still stands before the

mansion, whilst the lady was forced to witness their execution from one of the windows.

She was afterwards confined at the family residence at Maybole, 9 miles from Ayr, where the effigies of the gypsies are still to be seen in stone in this ancient building, which is still the principal feature in this ancient Ayrshire town.

On a summer evening, when a herd-boy in the vicinity of Ayr, I have heard the milkmaid, as she sat at her pail, sing the song with a pathos, alas! which I now know can be explained only on the ground that there have been more Johnnie Faas in the world than one.

Well, said "Johnnie Faa" was Sir John Faa of Dunbar, and yonder, only 3 miles from Dunbar, is Tynningham House, where Sir John won Lady Jean Hamilton's heart before she had seen, certainly before she had been given away by her father to the Earl of Cassilis. Sir John (*alias* Johnnie Faa) was just a little over 70 miles from home when he appeared before the fatal gate, disguised, and in company with the gypsy minstrels.

But enough, enough; where is the May Island all this time in the mist?

It is about nine o'clock; we have sailed two hours at a rate of 5 or 6 miles an hour; everything most enjoyable except that the thick weather prevents a broader view of the water than a circle with a radius

of half a mile. But the mist ultimately only added to a thing on board which by this time had already grown to considerable proportions—namely, our nautical pride. We had never gone wrong; and sometimes we had sailed for hours out of sight of land, with currents and calculations to make, for places we had never seen save on the paper chart, and always struck the point we wished; and here it was suggested that we could not go wrong. When we did sight the island (that is, within half a mile of it) the bow was pointing straight upon it as if we had been steering by sight of it all the time.

Can I convey the impression here made upon my mind? Conceive of an angel winging his way through the thin ether of space, but there is mist ahead till within 5000 miles of our world, when out of the mist emerges the bold outline of the massy globe sailing in the air: the feeling in the angel's bosom would be akin to that which inspired the soul of our skipper as the island revealed itself at hand that morning in the mist. We must confess to something like the momentary worship of the creature here, had we not risen higher, our spirits mounting through nature's majesty to nature's God.

I fearlessly assert that among the creatures of God next in sublimity to the globe in space is a solitary mountain in the sea. We speak not of the conception of the island seen from far and gradually

swelling in your vision as you gradually approach, but of the ocean monarch veiled in mist, till at his foot you look aloft and there o'erhead you see revealed his awful form.

For hours we had been accustomed to look on all the elements around as pliable, yea penetrable—the air, the mist, and even the water on which we were borne along; hundreds of square miles of ocean's surface had been free to us to cut our track at will; large ships, even huge iron steamers—the floating palaces, with their sea-kings on board—would alter their course to let us have our way; but his majesty the mountain in mid ocean moves not for ship or storm, for lightning or the thunder, for will of man nor yet for Neptune, though he rise and rage and roar around. A mountain ashore is grand; but the sense of terrible majesty, the awful perception of sublimity, the inspiration of reverence and awe are indescribable when from your tiny skiff on the unstable element you look aloft and see, hitherto concealed, the towering mountain lift its proud front to heaven—single-handed amid the wild waste of waters, the hero of a million hurricanes—standing in silent contempt, bidding defiance to the mightiest seas that sweep the deep, and dash themselves to nought against his granite foot. Woe unto that created thing—much more to that thing made with human hands—which dares dispute the mountain's

place or question his eternal rule amid the thundering billows. Let the proudest ship that ever sailed the Forth but impertinently touch his foot in her stately career, then down with a crash she goes to the caverns of the deep below—hundreds of wrecks lie rotting there—whilst on his hoary throne sublimely sits the monarch of the main.

CHAPTER XXI.

The May—The King and Queen of the Isle—Sailing over a newly sunk Ship—Reflection on our Sabbaths—The Preachers—Lady Passenger shipped for Dundee—Dangers Ahead—Incipient Gale—Caution Rewarded—Shaping our Course for the Tay—Sighting the Fairway—Casting Anchor—The Skipper's Dictum on the Ship.

We had sighted May Island, and said something about our feelings as the ocean monarch, close at hand, out of the mist unveiled himself. But soon our human pride rose up to taunt the giant as we nearly touched his sea-washed foot. Great as he was, yet proud were we that we could shoot him—at least shoot at him—taking aim 11 miles distant through the mist, and strike him with the *Silver Cloud*.

And yet these rude and rugged rocks of ocean, these haughty giants of the sea, if you take the right side of them, are all accommodating—all powerful to protect.

In the bosom of the hardy monster there is a little harbour for small craft like our own. There are human spirits here, too, that "let their light shine before" the strangers that visit the island, the worthy

antitypes of the lamps they light at night to cheer the stranger vessels on their way.

My "better half" and I two years ago visited the island with a company of excursionists in the *May* steamer from Dundee. The picture that day photographed on my mind I now read off. This is the chief keeper's (the king's) house. Mr. Dykes has delivered to them that day's *Dundee Advertiser*—a great prize. On the white flag floor the trim table is set. Between the table and the homely fireside stands the mistress, the queen of the isle, with teapot in hand, beckoning us to a seat, and at same time, with kindest countenance, making motherly inquiry at my lady friend as to how she managed to cross the waves. Then what have we on the table? Ham from "the Kingdom," possibly loaf-bread from Crail, plenty of splendid ship biscuit from Leith, plenty of sweet butter, the island being able to support one cow; and, casting a charm over the whole, there is plenty of warm welcome in the human hearts that watch the light-towers here. So that it had been no calamity to be becalmed in the longitude and latitude of this island on Saturday; for, though I am not certain but that honey could be gathered among the rocks, I am sure it is an island flowing with milk; and I might have been till Monday no less than the right reverend the archbishop of the isle. However, the breeze is too good for that, so on we go.

A piece of smooth water, of which we had about a mile here in lee of the island, is to the *Silver Cloud* like a piece with honey to a child; she is exceedingly pleased, and behaves delightfully well. I would have given something to have stood upon the light-tower, and as we cut the smooth blue have "seen ourselves as others saw us" that morning from the May.

Such was the mist that, though the distance be only $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles, the island was again hid before we had sighted the Fife shore; yet this was one of the most pleasant sails we ever had enjoyed.

At Fifeness we were becalmed, and entered the snug little harbour of Crail. If I had started when I awoke in the morning without *blethering* with the old salt at the harbour of Dunbar, I could this day have finished my voyage.

At Crail we learned that on the previous Tuesday evening a ship had struck the May Island just at the point to which we sailed so close, and gone down suddenly—the men launching their boat and very narrowly escaping, as in five minutes she was under the waves, and not a vestige of her to be seen. Right over this newly-buried ship we had smoothly and safely sailed.

At last we find that we have passed out of the region of the incredulous, for when asked where we are bound to no one seems struck with astonishment

at the answer; indeed, they inquired as to whether we were not "frae the Ferry."

We have no religious objection to it, and can heartily join in the praise of God with organ sounds, especially if it be to join a brother of a different cast of mind; but the genius of the Scots which prompts them to "mak' siccar" rejoices in the matter strong and pure and not "made down." So we thought when seated for the first time, after a three months' absence, in a Scotch kirk, and the precentor, single-handed, without even the fantastic flourish of the fist, rose and to one of the massy old tunes led off the opening Psalm:—

"My soul, wait thou with patience
Upon thy God alone,
On him dependeth all my hope
And expectation.

"He only my salvation is,
And my strong rock is he;
He only is my sure defence,
I shall not moved be.

"In God my glory placed is,
And my salvation sure;
In God the rock is of my strength,
My refuge most secure."

That, a Scotchman would say, is to the point, and is the expression of the very essence of divine inspiration, the grandest praise to God. And thus we sang, having crossed the English Channel, crossed

the Thames, crossed the deeps and shoals, crossed the Border again, and crossed the Forth. Welcome, my native land! "Auld Scotia's grandeur" never appears so grand till it is contrasted with the gew-gaws which we find in the so-called sunny south.

There is a remark which we shall here make, as it is suggested by the very able discourses which, dropping in unawares, we heard preached by the Rev. Mr. Jackson of Crail. We invariably attended church on Sabbath, and were not particular about denominations. We heard Independents, Presbyterians, Methodists, and ministers of the Church of England, and (with one exception) we were struck with the ability, the earnestness, and the careful preparation displayed, and every one of them, wherever it was our lot to listen along the whole coast-line from Dundee to Dover, having the true ring of the gospel. In some instances there were great minds in very small places; and, notwithstanding the openings to preferment and riches in the world should such intellects make application, it is marvellous the talent, the zeal, the noble human powers which the love of Christ, the love of truth, the love of the gospel, and the honour of the clerical office can command.

Thursday, 16th Aug.—We are still at Crail, kept here with calms, fogs, and head-winds. Sometimes as the day wears on little puffs spring up from vari-

ous quarters, and we resolve, even without wind, starting with the help of the tide, to try it on the following morning.

There is an old screw steamer going to work at a wreck at Fifeness, and the captain offers me a tow as far as he goes—3 miles—which would leave me only 9 miles to the fairway of the Tay.

By this time I have a passenger. I had visited Dundee per rail, and on returning to Crail brought with me a Dundee lady who had been longing not only to see all the crew, but also the vessel that had borne them so safely over the waves, the last sight of which she had got that May morning as she stood upon the Ferry beach and watched it waning on the waters. Our lady passenger most graciously crushing herself into the narrow limits of our cabin, beside the skipper and his crew, had slept on board two nights in the harbour of Crail, and was quite willing to sail home in the *Silver Cloud* under the command of such an experienced captain. But just as the old screw got up her steam the said passenger grew very sick. Experience or no experience, this was a new experience. What were we to do? I could not fling her ashore to find her way home without evidence that she would recover ashore, and that the sickness was caused merely by the motion and the unstable surroundings of her new lodging. Neither could I sail with her in fog and no wind on our

doubtful voyage, with the probability that she would become worse. Meanwhile our screw friend left Crail. Friday wore away till it became clear, from a nice easterly breeze which had sprung up during the day, that we could have been comfortably in the Tay, but a great deal clearer that we were still in the harbour of Crail.

Saturday, 18th.—A gale from nor'-east was now incipient. I sent my lady passenger per rail to Dundee, and resolved to sail out and judge from appearances in the offing as to the advisability of our making an attempt to enter the Tay. With two tacks I was in a position to clear the North Carr. There was an increasing wind, a drenching rain, a tremendous swell on the sea, and an impenetrable fog. But it was the direction of the wind that decided my action. We might sail within four points of the wind, but not in a sea like that. I saw the danger—namely, that after sailing for say two hours, when you did learn where you were, you might find yourself, with that nor'-east wind and sea, 2 miles to lee of the Tay bar, both wind and wave increased, making it hopeless to attempt to beat up for the bar, and nothing behind you but the partially known harbour of St. Andrews, which, either from the state of the tide or the inshore wind, might have become inaccessible. Sitting upon the swell between May Island and Fifeness, measuring the matter thus, with

all the sails set so that they might not require to be touched till we passed Broughty Castle—that is, suppose we lay the entrance of the Tay—instead of taking that course I put the helm up and bore away before it back into the good harbour of Crail; the intelligence of which movement we send by wire to Dundee. The wind did continue to increase, and next morning—that is before the Sabbath was old—a Norwegian brig was discovered caught in the very danger I had pictured. She was large enough to be seen; her cannon was heard sending the echo of distress over the wave; the coast was moved with excitement; the telegraph fired the news to Dundee; three steamers with difficulty left the Tay to her assistance; and the lifeboat put off from St. Andrews to save the crew; whilst the captain of the *Silver Cloud* was reaping the benefit of his caution and patience, comfortably enjoying and preaching the gospel to the good people of Crail, under the care and Christian hospitality of my friend the Rev. Mr. Jackson—the booms meanwhile having been placed across the mouth of Crail Harbour, and the *Silver Cloud* as snug as if she had been in a dock.

Now followed all the incidents of a gale—the excitement along the coast, the distressing news carried by telegraph and newspaper stirring the hearts of people to the core that never see the ocean's edge, men drowning, their dead bodies being recov-

ered, wives despairing of their husbands who had left in fishing-boats, and whose whereabouts were not yet ascertained; during which time—sometimes in Crail, sometimes in Dundee—we wait the wind to wind up our aquatic wanderings for the season.

Friday, 24th August.—Sleeping on board in the harbour of Crail, we wake at four, and, looking out, observe that what wind there is comes from about west-sou'-west. All hands are instantly piped; everything prepared for sea. We soon cleared the salmon nets, and were gliding past the extreme point of Fifeness. The sky was of an angry red, which I rightly took to mean more wind; but our hearts seemed to say, "Come on, ye winds; rouse ye as ye please; blow on; all the sea ye can raise before we reach the Tay we defy, unless ye change your direction."

Taking our departure from the land at the North Carr beacon, with a leading wind, we shape our course away into the mist, north a half east. Just at this time a schooner that hailed from sea, and was 2 miles ahead of us, evidently, after sighting the North Carr (this was his landfall), began to steer right in the line we had chosen. Hurrah! she is bound for the Tay. However sure you may be of your course you like a proof thus of your correctness. After testing the schooner's helmsman for a little,

we find him very steady, so that as we cook our breakfast it matters not whether we keep our eye on our own compass or on the vessel ahead. It was clear, however, that he was keeping the course calculated exactly to strike the fairway, whereas I could enter the channel of the river 2 miles further west with perfect safety; so, luffing about a point or so, I left him in the lee, and, going at about 6 miles an hour I also soon left him a good way behind.

What black spots are yon ahead bobbing on the waters? Hey! these are the Ferry fishermen. As we pass through them, caps in air, they make the waters resound with hurrahs. The reader can imagine our feelings here. From first to last, wherever we went, the fishermen were those who took the most lively interest in us, and considered our voyage in the light of a miracle.

Here we see some large ships cruising about evidently waiting the tide. (What a boon the lightship must be!) Now we sight the pilot cutter. The next thing we know away to leeward is the Fairway Buoy; then are picked up black buoys No. 1 and No. 2. Making sure of No. 3 we close haul, stand in for it, and cross the bank there into the channel, though forty minutes must still expire before the tide turns in our favour. The wind all along had continued to freshen, and had veered from west-south-west to west; and, with one reef in the lug for comfort, we had a stiff beat up the river.

We dropped anchor (our mooring buoy having disappeared) at Broughty Ferry about 11 o'clock forenoon, or fully one hour in advance of the larger vessels, inclusive of our friend who was 2 miles before us at the Carr.

We left the West Ferry Roads on Friday morning, 18th May; we reached the same spot again, as we have seen, on Friday forenoon, 24th August—exactly fourteen weeks.

We might have chosen some other Scripture, to the effect that "He that hath gathered the wind in His fists" would temper the blast for us; but no; and so there were storms and wrecks all around, also beneath us, only some hours before submerged. But we certainly experienced the promise hung prominently in our cabin, "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee." As to the weather since we left here, we had scarcely any rain except in or near Scotland. As for our health, I left the Tay with a bandage on my waist for an internal malady, and though I was exposed on the open sea all the following night, by next day the bandage was flung aside, and the two of us during the whole fourteen weeks never had an ailment, not even the slightest touch of cold.

As to the *Silver Cloud*, she was built for me and according to my wishes; she has therefore never been

in charge of any other. Many men of experience in other boats have had their joking remark about her; but here and now at the end of my thousand miles' cruise I shall have the presumption to constitute myself the best judge of *her* powers. Sometimes we had not smooth water—witness the bay of Scarborough, the strong gusts from the Haddington hills, the war raging between wind and tide off Emmanuel Head, the white horses in the bay, and the breakers on the bar of Berwick, the Channel smitten with the sou'-wester sending its seas rolling round Cape Grisnez, the thunder-storm on the flats along the shores of Kent, and the water mountains in the Wash; but one thing we never felt, one thing we declare never appeared—namely, that the *Silver Cloud* was dangerously small for the troubled waters with which she had to do battle.

THE END.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

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